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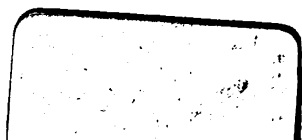
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FOWLS:
A PLAIN AND FAMILIAR TREATISE
ON THE
PRINCIPAL BREEDS.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR BREEDING AND EXHIBITION.

Sixth Edition, revised, corrected and enlarged.

WITH WHICH IS REPRINTED
THE DORKING FOWL:
Its Management and Feeding for the Table.
EIGHTH EDITION.

BY
JOHN BAILY,
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PREFACE.

IN bringing the sixth edition of this work before the public, it becomes a pleasing duty to return thanks for the support it has received.

Honestly aware I have no pretensions to the title of a writer, I believe its merit is entirely confined to its practical character.

Fifty years daily acquaintance with the subject, qualifies me to write upon it.

I have endeavoured to condense the information it contains, and to the best of my ability have expunged every unnecessary word.

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EGGS FOR SITTING FROM CHOICE BIRDS

of every Breed of
FOWL AND DUCK.

PARTRIDGE AND PHEASANT EGGS

IN THE SEASON.

Every possible care is taken to ensure good eggs, and JOHN BAILY can confidently appeal to thousands who have bought them, and been very successful. But, as they are beyond his control after they have left him, he respectfully declines any responsibility about them.

THE WHOLE FOR READY MONEY ONLY.

FOWLS.

CHAPTER I.

Just as change of air is at times necessary to the human being in order to preserve or regain health, so is fresh ground necessary for poultry. The constant occupation of the same spot becomes injurious. It will at once be seen such a necessity militates against anything like a permanent building, where the well-doing of poultry is the object to be attained. Where they are merely adjuncts to the stock of a model dairy or farm, or the objects of fancy, the end is attained if a certain number are always to be seen in good health and feather. If left to find their own roosting places their judgment will generally be found to be a correct one; they will avoid draughts, and if they have enemies around, they will choose places inaccessible to them. Where there are large farm-buildings, almost every covered place becomes a roosting-place—cattle-sheds, cart-houses, calf-pens, and even pig-styes. There is one advantage in this, they are healthier than when they

are confined in large numbers in one place. When, however, these facilities do not exist, it is necessary to provide a house, and that is the question with which we have here to do.

The style of the exterior is matter of taste; but certain requirements are imperatively necessary to the comfort and well-doing of the inmates. The larger and higher it can be built, the better for health, it permits a thorough current of air, so high above the fowls, that purity of atmosphere is obtained without chill or draught to the inmates. They are very sensitive in these matters, and will spend all their time shifting about to avoid them.

Thorough ventilation is very necessary, and there should be openings 'all round the house, or at all events, on every side, admitting the wind, and causing a continual current of air. They also tend to keep the house cool in the summer; they may be made by the omission of bricks, or by letting in ornamental iron-work, or by leaving out a plank if the house is made of wood. In all these cases it is safer to err by making the openings too large than too small. In large houses, it is also well to have an opening in the centre of the roof. To prevent the entrance of other birds into the house, all these openings except that in the centre of the roof, which will probably be of an ornamental character with

venetian sides, should be covered with galvanized wire-netting. The house should be as large as space and means afford. Where the former is limited, that which cannot be given in extent must be made up in height, to allow the inmates as much air as possible. Strict attention to these points will enable it to be used for many years without taint, if it be not over-stocked. We have such a house that has been in use sixteen years, and is as fresh as the first day it was used; but it has peculiar advantages, being the bay of a very large barn. It is twenty-eight feet long, twenty-one feet wide, and twenty-four feet high in the middle. From sixty to eighty fowls have roosted in it for many years. By strict cleanliness, and the occasional use of disinfectants, we have never had the symptom of a taint.

The door should not be in the middle of the house, but in one corner of it, and should if possible open to the west or the south. The perches should not be in a line with the door, but protected from it. They should be within twenty-four inches of the ground. Fir poles about fourteen inches in circumference make the best, when sawn in half. The bark should be left on them. They should rest on ledges or cross-pieces, as such an arrangement facilitates cleaning out, and they should all be the same height from the ground.

Many fowls are hardly satisfied unless they can perch on a beam or such place many feet high. It may be they reach it by flying from one piece to the other, till they attain the height they seek; but when they wish to come down they do it by flying to the ground. They fall on their feet, the balls of which being either bruized or perforated by small sharp stones, in both cases cause inaction, and consequently loss of condition.

There should be an opening to the south or west for the fowls to go in and out; this should not be closed, but it is not without its objections. If it lets the fowls out it lets other things in also, and where people are about at daybreak it is far better the door should be the only means of egress, and opened by them. Fowls are very fond of rambling about at early morning, when they pick up much food that is not to be found later in the day. The best floor we know is made of a layer of chalk three inches deep, well rammed down, then as much earth also rammed down, and then two inches of gravel. Neither brick, stone, wood, or asphaltum, should be used. They produce leg disease and lameness. It is not the nature of a fowl to stand with its toes stretched out as far as is possible, yet with these floors it must do so. They want to stand on a yielding surface, and one that will admit of their scratching. This gravel

surface can always be kept clean by a broom being drawn lightly over it; and if it is raked it is kept even. As it is very desirable the house should be light, it should have as many glazed windows as can be had. It is an additional merit, if they are made to open in the summer. There should be wire-netting nailed in front to protect the glass, and if the windows open inside, it enables them to be open during the whole summer. The entry of other birds is also prevented.

Fowls only should roost in the house; no ducks, geese, or turkies. Fowls dislike it. Water-birds especially taint houses.

We have had to do only with roosting, but laying must also be provided for. Either a small house may be built for this purpose, or some boxes may be put in the large house. They should be on the ground, and are very simple, being merely pieces of board twenty inches high, thirteen inches deep, and fastened to the wall, thirteen inches from each other, thus:—



Latitude may be allowed as to a separate laying-house, and it is certain that hens prefer to lay in

their roosting house rather than in any other. They are also very apt when excluded from it, to steal their nests, or lay their eggs in improper places, where they seldom come to the right owner; but no such choice may be allowed as to sitting. The sitting house must be devoted to that purpose only. No other hen may have access to it. The sitting places may be made like those we have described for laying, or boxes may be used for the purpose, or carrying out our promise of suggesting the most economical plans for everything, we mention that sometimes we have bought empty butter-tubs, and having them sawn in half in the middle, with top and bottom knocked out, each tub has formed two good sitting-places. They must, however, be covered, and for that purpose, we have a frame fitted in with wires or wire-netting. This allows full ventilation, and prevents either escape or intrusion.

There is nothing better for the bottom of a nest than a turf cut with short heath, broom, or grass upon it; this should be put at the bottom, and a little straw at top. A nest so made is healthier for the hen and chickens, as it admits of sufficient ventilation, and is always free from vermin.

Those at liberty like to lay in a nest of eggs, on which another sits, and this causes them to come off irregularly. We have found it an excellent plan to

have a spring on the back of the door of this house. It prevents bad effects from carelessness. Another useful contrivance is, to have an inner door made of stout frame-work, over which strong wire-netting should be stretched. This gives air, and prevents intrusion. We make all our houses square, because then they are useful for other purposes, if not required for poultry.

Many can afford to indulge their tastes in building houses, and they may do so without detriment to the interior; but the larger number take to poultry as a hobby, and wish to carry it out at the least possible expense. To them, we say, make your house of wood. We have had such for many years, and with the assistance of a coat of tar, they will last much longer. Where the pursuit is to be carried out in a more expensive style, the house may be made of brick-work, 3 ft. from the ground, and then continued with boards.

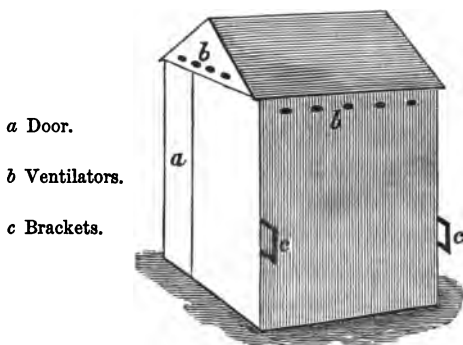
CHAPTER II.

WE will now speak on the subject of taint and disinfection. There is no doubt it is advantageous to give fowls fresh ground. It is more particularly so for rearing. We have always endeavoured to divide our space, however limited, into two parts; the one used for chickens during the rearing-season being afterwards laid up till the following year. It is not, however, possible to move the poultry-house, at least such a one as we are now treating of, and then it must, if possible, be kept untainted. The first point is daily cleanliness. It must be recollected that the sooner that which offends is removed from the house, the less its influence will be. As soon as the door is opened in the morning every fowl leaves the house. That is the time when it should be cleaned, not merely swept in the common sense of the word, but scrupulously cleansed from every thing that offends. It is especially necessary to look in corners, and if there is brick-work, in any cracks, or crannies, or places where the mortar has fallen out. A good mixture of lime and water in a pail with a brush at hand is a great help in preventing infection. The floor should slant a little every way to the door; and those who wish for health and cleanliness will be

careful to see that the surface be kept scrupulously even and level. As soon as holes and hollows are permitted, farewell to cleanliness and health. A well kept poultry-house should not have the least smell; and if such is detected the morning's work has been badly done. It should never be overlooked; but the corners should be examined, and the lime applied freely to the brick-work. We have found much benefit from the use of Carbolic Acid soap. We make it into a thick lather, and, with a small whitewasher's brush, wash all the wood-work. It is also very beneficial to wash the perches with it at least once per week. We are convinced that bad smells are very injurious to the health of poultry; and disinfectants are so cheap that we never allow ourselves to be without them. We find the use of Carbolic Acid soap and of McDougall's powder most beneficial.

Such are the poultry-houses of those who can afford to keep it on a large scale, or who already possess ready-made appliances in the shape of out-houses, unused sheds, loose boxes, &c., &c. But while almost every one wishes to keep poultry, a few only have these facilities. To some expense is no object, with others it is very important. To these latter we commend such houses as these we sketch below. They can be made for Thirty-five shillings

each, and are very durable if covered now and then with a coating of tar. We have some that have been twenty years in use, and are so still. The dimensions are six feet high in the centre, and six feet square inside. A cock and six hens will do well in one of these.



a Door.

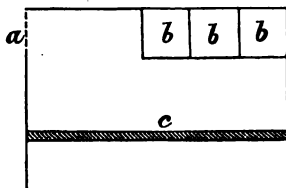
b Ventilators.

c Brackets.

a Door.

b Laying boxes.

c Perch.



There is one more thing that may be very advantageously adopted, and can be done at small expense, and that is to have a covered run for them,

to be used in wet weather. Any sort of roof will do, and it should be in a sheltered spot, running the length of the yard, and projecting ten or twelve feet or more from the wall or paling against which it is placed. It should be exposed to the sun, and sheltered from cold winds. The floor should be raised above the level of the yard, and covered with sand and wood ashes some inches deep. The hens with chickens may be put here under their ribs in wet or unkind weather; and it affords at all times a favourite resort for poultry to bask, and take their dust bath, which is essential to their well-doing. The flooring should be higher at the back than in front.

We are not friendly to artificial heat, and if we had the offer of gratuitous warming we should decline it.

CHAPTER III.

From poultry houses of all sorts to poultry runs seems natural progress. Where the amateur is fortunate enough to have a sufficient run for his fowls to be at full liberty, we have little to say. A large number may be kept in perfect health where

they have five or six acres of grass to run over. One or two hundreds may be kept on 14 acres. Those who have smaller space must keep fewer birds, but much may be done by what we call poultry-gardening. On an acre of grass we should consider we could easily keep from thirty to forty fowls in perfect health. A plain level surface is not necessary, nor is it desirable either for this or a smaller extent. Just as a professed and competent landscape gardener will give to two acres the appearances and conveniences of a park six acres in extent, so judicious arrangements will give to a run of an acre or even less, many of the advantages supposed to belong only to larger spaces. On all grass it is necessary to put manure for the sake of the herbage. In such a case let the fowls undertake the duty of spreading it. Scratching is necessary to their health—the result supplies them with food and medicine. Road grit, the trimmings of the road-side, the cleanings-out of the small water-furrows that carry off the rain, are generally considered to be among the best dressings for grass. There are few places where these are not to be had. Three or four barrow loads will make a small heap or mound, and that is the form in which it should be put. It should, if possible, stand in the middle of the run. It is full of insects and vegetable life, and the fowls give it a searching examination.

It also has the property of being almost always dry, and it is highly pleasing to watch the fowls dusting themselves, and burying themselves in the grit on a summer's day. They eat much of it, and carry much with them in their feathers—thus scattering it about. It should be replaced, as the larger the mound the better; and if it be convenient to plant it, it is advisable. This planting may be of a permanent character, consisting of shrubs and evergreens, or merely for the time; if the latter, artichokes are good, or hempseed, or anything that affords shelter. These helps are necessary, because it is an error to suppose birds like being scorched by the sun. Just as in winter, if the pale sun shines only through a crack, or a partly-closed window, all the fowls, if in confinement, crowd on the narrow streak, so in the heat of summer, when the sun has been up for hours, when all things are hot and dry, the fowls either lie quiet or they seek shade. They always prefer the latter. In common with all other animals of the feathered tribe, they prefer that which affords clear running at bottom and good covering over head. It enables them to see and avoid danger. It affords them a cool resting-place, and very often provides food in the shape of insects, driven like themselves to seek shelter from the heat. All birds, however tame, like at times to be out of sight, and

fowls are no exceptions. A natural slope, or an artificial bank, planted with shrubs entirely or in part, is a desideratum. In some place, either in their run, or where, though easy of access, it will not be an eye-sore, there should always be a heap of bricklayer's rubbish. It is essential to the hen for the formation of shell, and is often useful in preventing them from eating their eggs—as there is no doubt the cause of the abominable practice is the desire to possess the shell. Then, after the contents have been tasted, the bad habit is quickly acquired.

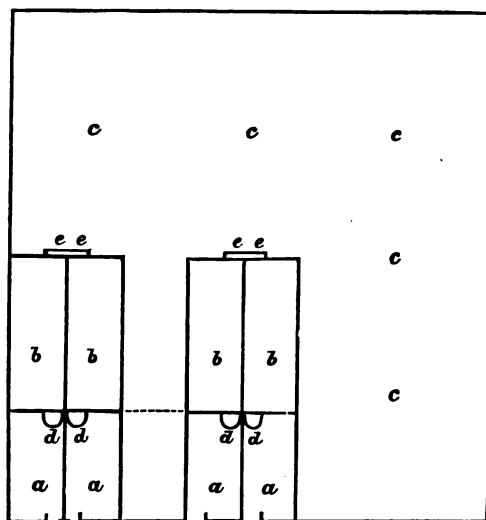
Where there is choice of ground the dryest should be chosen, and if on a slight slope so much the better.

CHAPTER IV.

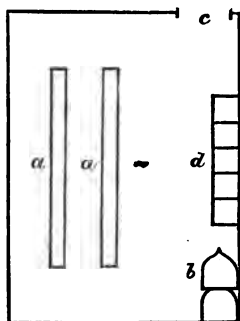
THE owners of very large premises and many acres of land often complain they have not room for two breeds, while those who can number their acres on the fingers of one hand, not only believe in the possession of great advantages, but they determine to make use of them by keeping several different sorts. Like most other things this is possible, and

merely involves some trouble and painstaking. The history of poultry-success is rather one of painstaking than outlay. We will endeavour to describe a place where we have seen four breeds kept successfully and quite distinct with the exercise of some care and supervision. The whole extent is an acre and a quarter, orchard and grass.

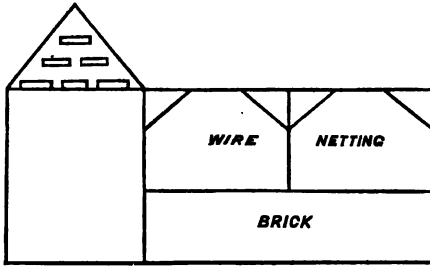
In the summer each breed is out every other day. The days are long—one set is out from six in the morning till mid-day; another from mid-day till the evening. When it is desirable these hours may be altered so as to allow three of the four breeds to be out daily, the length of the days makes it easy. It is not as necessary in the winter, nor do they desire it as much. Some breeds are less inclined to discipline than others. Houdans, Spanish and Hambros like to go beyond bounds. Cochins and Brahmas of the different shades can always be driven in in a few minutes by a boy. There is not the slightest difficulty. We give the ground plan of the whole place; and after much experience we prefer this to any other contrivance for keeping several breeds on a limited space. One great advantage is, it is not troublesome.



a a a a Roosting Houses.
b b b b Wired run in front.
c c c c Orchard and grass.
d d d, d Outlets from House to run.
e e e e Doors opening to Orchard.



a a Perches.
b Door with slide, admitting to wired run.
c Door of admission to House.
d Laying boxes.



The square enclosure represents the whole space, an acre and a quarter; *a a* the roosting houses; *a a b c d* the inner arrangement of them. To each house there is an entrance at the back; and there is also a door opening from each run to the open. The *d d d d* outlets are from the roost to the run; and it is always advisable to have a sliding door to each, running in grooves. The size of the houses must depend on the available space, and on the number of birds it is desirable to keep in each. A dozen fowls will do well in a house ten feet long, eight wide, and ten feet high. The interior arrangement should be such as we have described.

CHAPTER V.

THANKS to poultry having become a large question, it is now tolerably understood on all points; nevertheless, it is well to leave nothing to be imagined. Among other questions is that of choosing a breed fitted for the spot and soil they will have to dwell in and upon. There is little doubt that the most enthusiastic of amateurs are those who have the least accommodation, and will therefore labour under the greatest difficulties in indulging their hobbies. Those who leave a city for a semi-suburban residence become at once aware of the numerous *penchants* they have, of whose existence they knew nothing before. Perhaps none is more general than the love of poultry. But the place and conveniences have to be considered. Will the end of the garden be large enough? Will a four-feet wall confine them? Need the space be covered over the top? What breed can they keep in such a place? Many years ago these questions would have been difficult to answer; but since the institution of Shows the entire subject has been so thoroughly ventilated, it is become easy. Thus we know that for stay-at-home qualities, and for a contented mind though in almost close confinement, Cochins and Brahmas are emi-

nently fitted. A wall four feet high is to them both, the end of the world. They have no desire to go beyond it. They will grow and lay and thrive. If you have large space and good or easy neighbours, keep Game, Spanish, Hambros, Crèvecœurs, and Houdans. All these seem to think that, except at meal and bed times, any place is better than home. They scour the country, and while they pick up food for themselves, they often do the same in the way of complaint for their owner. In making choice of a breed people must weigh the conveniences they have to offer. It is bootless to think of rearing chickens in a very confined place. Eggs will be the chief thing. If chickens are not wanted, then, as broody hens are nuisances where they are not necessities, it may be as well to choose one of the non-sitting breeds. Hambros lay the largest number of eggs, but they are small. Spanish lay the largest eggs and many of them. Crèvecœurs lay many and large eggs. Houdans lay more but smaller. We should be curious to keep accurate account of all these. We believe that in weight of food there would be little difference. If poultry is kept with a view to profit, then it must be ascertained whether the demand is better for eggs or fowls. If the latter, the answer will be found later in this chapter; if the former, we will try to make the subject clear. We are often

asked, which is the best breed to lay in the winter? because it will be evident that new-laid eggs, sold in December and January at two or three pence each, will do more to lighten the Corn Merchant's bill than those that fall into the summer routine of sixteen for a shilling. By saving pullets every month in the year, excepting November and December, eggs may be had all the year round. It is useless to believe that certain birds are winter layers. The pullets of every breed lay at a certain age, but hens do not lay in the winter.

If it is found the demand is greater for chickens and for table than for eggs, it must be ascertained what the nature of the demand is, whether for good, useful, or for delicate poultry. Next, the capabilities of the run must be carefully weighed and tested. If there is space, and delicate poultry is required, the Dorking will be the fowl to keep; but we repeat, it is useless to attempt to keep them in confinement.

If the demand is for good, useful, family fowls, and if the space is limited, we recommend the Brahmas. They are hardy and prolific; easily reared, and their size makes them very saleable in many country districts. They should be killed at about fourteen or sixteen weeks old. They will then be tender. Nothing so effectually closes a market for poultry as to take old fowls to sell as young

ones. The increased size is bought too dear at the expense of quality; and they have cost more to feed. The desire to get a few eggs from a pullet before she is killed takes more from her value by impairing quality than it pays in money. Buyers will always come where they can depend on finding that which they seek, and they will avoid the stall or shop where they have been deceived. Surplus cocks should always be killed off first, and from their size they generally sell well.

In many places the large, coarse cock that sells for Three Shillings in September would have made four in June, and three months' food would have been economised.

In keeping poultry for profit it must be borne in mind that every meal eaten by a fowl after it is large enough for the table is so much taken from the profit. No man was ever fortunate enough to breed all good birds; the faulty ones should be sold as soon as possible—they eat the food, they help to taint the place, and they are eyesores.

CHAPTER VI.

WE always approach this question of food with diffidence. It is impossible to lay down rules that cannot be deviated from. It is impossible to give a fixed dietary. Most of the complaints we hear of poultry proving unprofitable, and being given up in disgust, arise from the fact, that there is either waste from carelessness, or from mistaken kindness.

Every person who has had large experience in poultry will know, that where one fowl suffers from want, a thousand die from over-feeding. Nothing is more common than to receive a letter from a person to whom you have sold or given some fowls, asking on what they have been fed, for they eat nothing. It is wrong to suppose a fowl is out of health or dissatisfied with its food, because it is not eating each time it is looked at. Where they are properly kept, they are fed as regularly as human beings are in a well-ordered family. There is no inclination to eat another meal, simply because the owner is looking on. Besides it is with fowls as with some of the higher orders of creation, it is not well that food should be always at hand to tempt. Just as human beings

take their "constitutional," and deem it a necessity, either to walk or ride a certain distance, and to abstain from eating for some hours; even so between the first meal at six, and the next at twelve, nothing should be given to adult poultry. They will search out every corner and turn over every heap, however small, to find food if they want it. Lacking success they will long for mid-day. Most things are comparative, and many men skilled in medical science will listen with respect to the opinion of an uneducated person, or an old woman, on the subject of feeding poultry, when that which they have successfully practised all their lives forms the foundation of the knowledge they seek. It requires only to be applied. It is unquestionable that it is good for fowls to leave off with an appetite. It is far better they should be anxious for their food, than that they should be careless about it. Therefore, if two fowls will not run after one piece of food give up feeding. We have been successful rearers of fowls for many years, and have kept thousands; we do so now. We are advocates only for the plainest food. We take our cue from nature. The birds that live wild get only such, and it takes them some time to get a meal, yet they grow up in perfect health and strength, their plumage is more beautiful than that of a trained game cock, and they are always in condition

for the table. No fowl should be fed from a trough, or any other vessel, the food should be scattered on the ground, and the birds made to seek and pick it up a grain or small piece at a time, except when the ground is covered with snow; at such times the food may be put in a trough, because it not only prevents the loss that otherwise takes place, but it enables the birds to eat their food without swallowing snow with it. This latter is very injurious to all birds. The longer the meal lasts, the better. It is not feeding to throw down a heap of food; we have seen the ground outside a roosting-place an inch deep in food, and yet our business was to ascertain why the fowls did badly, and had no appetite. They were sick of the sight of their food, and poisoned with the smell of it. We feed adults on barley meal or ground oats, slaked with water, every morning; on whole corn, maize, or barley, at mid-day, and on meal again at night. We always feed as nearly as possible at day-break. We never feed till they leave off. The crumbs from the breakfast and dinner tables, and scraps from the kitchen, are great helps, but they must be given as part of the ordinary food, and not in addition to it. The quantity may also be safely diminished where there is a good grass run as soon as it begins to grow, also where there is a stack-yard. It makes much difference where the

birds are in confinement and have nothing but that which is given by hand.

The plan of giving a stated quantity every day is always a mistake, because there are times when they eat more or less than at others. They will also eat more of one food than another. Birds coming from places where food is very scarce and given scantily, will, when they come into a land of plenty, eat voraciously and in large quantities at first, but they are soon satisfied and settle down to an average. We are not friendly to the plan or idea of tempting fowls to eat, but we do not approve of feeding always on the same food. We tried an experiment many years ago. We confined some fowls (cochins) in a small place that was kept scrupulously clean and hard swept, so that there should be nothing on the floor, and we fed the fowls on the best plain barley. After the first week the consumption became less every day. At last they refused their food, and would have starved if we had not removed them. Although it is impossible to name any uniform quantity, yet it may be said, that a healthy growing fowl will eat weekly about two-thirds of a gallon of corn; but we repeat, at the risk of tautology, if it can get any part of it by its own exertions, that part should be deducted from the quantity *given*.

In severe frosts, and above all in snow, the quan-

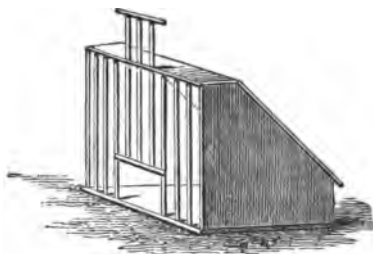
tity of food must be increased, and it is not money thrown away to improve its quality. They get nothing at such times but that which is given. They require plenty while they are growing, and they will make a good return in health and vigour when arrived at maturity. If it be possible, let them eat their green food, as lettuce, &c., in a growing state; it is not only more nourishing, but they eat it with greater pleasure, because it resists the pull necessary to tear it, and it is more natural. Those who are obliged to keep fowls in confinement, should have large sods or turfs of grass cut, with earth heavy enough to enable them to tear off the grass, without being obliged to drag the sod about with them. A garden dunghheap, overgrown with artichokes, mallows, &c., is an excellent covert for chickens, especially in hot weather. They find shelter, and meet with many insects there.

If from any cause a fowl has been long fasting, it should be carefully fed at first, on soft food, such as sopped bread, and very little given at a time; after very long fasting, if the bird appears to suffer, bread and ale may be given. For the first three hours, it should have very little, say a teacupful, and it should be wet enough to serve for victuals and drink. Then it may be fed on slaked meal, and turned out with a full crop. Food should be given fresh; a careful

poultry feeder will always cheerfully mix twice rather than have any left, and it is beneficial for them at times to have a scanty meal. Many have been discouraged, and some have been deterred from keeping fowls by the expense of feeding. If they will attend personally to the consumption for a week, and follow the method we point out, they will be surprised at the diminution in the cost. It is not necessary to invent or supply imaginary wants. They do not require to be coaxed to eat, and where food is lying about, there is waste and mismanagement. The economy is not in food alone; they are large gainers in health, and the pleasure of keeping them is much increased. The tendency of over-feeding is to make them squat about under sheds and cart-houses, and instead of spreading over a meadow or stubble in little active parties, searching hedges and banks, and basking on their sides in the dust, with opened feathers, and one wing raised to get all the glorious sun's heat that they can, they stand about a listless pampered troop. To lay much better; to breed better chickens; and live longer, are the results of diminished, not increased expense, and all that is required is a little personal superintendence at first, till the new system is understood and appreciated. In most yards the birds are overfed, and there is waste in nearly all.

It is common for those who undertake to be poultry correspondents, to be asked, what is the food to make fowls lay? High feeding of any sort will do it, but more particularly hempseed, and tallow-chandlers' greaves. The former is given whole, the latter should be chopped fine, and then put in a bucket and covered with boiling water. The mouth of the bucket should be covered with a double sack, or other cloth, so completely as to exclude air and confine the steam till the greaves are thoroughly softened. When they are nearly cold, they may be given. These will make them lay, but they shorten life; premature decrepitude comes on. The work of two years has been forced into one, and incurable disease is the result.

The food of small chickens is a different matter. Here you may be allowed to tempt them to eat, as every one has not space enough to keep a separate run for the youngsters, and as it is neither requisite or desirable to keep all alike, it will be well to give you the sketch of the best coop we know for hens and chickens. In the winter the hen and chickens should remain under it ten weeks or more; in the summer, six or seven, still longer if she will. These ribs must be covered up at night. The food for the chickens may be thrown in through the front bars, and the hen will see no intruder benefit by it,



The dimensions : twenty-four inches high in front, eighteen wide in front, and twenty-four in depth. It should be solid everywhere, except in front. This should be made of round bars, the three centre ones should slide up and down, and it is a good plan if one at each end does the same. The chickens go in and out easily, and the hen does not attempt to do the same, as is sometimes the case when the larger middle slide is raised.

The food for small chickens will be found in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

DISEASES.

THOSE who keep poultry now, do so under much more favorable circumstances than they did, who embarked in the pursuit formerly. The difficulty then was to keep fowls in tolerable health; that has disappeared, and now with ordinary painstaking, it is not too much to expect to be free from anxiety on that account. Health in birds, as in other creatures, is the reward of painstaking. Cleanliness is one of the first things to be observed. Where there is dirt, there cannot be health. Another essential is to avoid those things that are detrimental to health.

Many years ago, no one bought a fowl, had one given to him, exchanged one, or sent one to a show, that he did not expect the arrival or return of the bird would bring roup with it.

In those days roup was indeed a thing to be dreaded. It ran through a yard. The apparently healthy fowls first swelled round the eyes, then the nostrils became choked, then the throat filled, and breathing became difficult, the eyes were closed, and after a time the bird died. It was the dread of the poultry yard. Dirt and confinement were the causes

of it all. It especially seemed the normal condition of Hambros and Polands. They brought it from abroad, and to those who care to entertain the subject, we think we can give data that will justify us in saying rinderpest is gained in the same way, and may be got rid of in a like manner. All the Hambros and Polands came from Holland. They were packed in the smallest possible space in open wicker baskets, that contained also ducks, geese, storks, bitterns, &c. Every inch of space was economised. Bass mats were sewn over the front, and in bad weather they were covered with tarpauling. They were not fed or attended to, but as soon as the vessel arrived they were landed often from a close corner, where they steamed with heat, and were left on a quay exposed for hours to the east wind. They also then had an unlimited supply of hard food and water. The advent of the roup was only a question of hours, and wherever the birds went, they carried the disease with them. Many a yard was depopulated, and it became at last so impossible to buy them without buying the disease at the same time, that they became unsaleable, and the trade was relinquished so far as importation on a considerable scale was concerned. Engineers and others, then dealt in a small way, by bringing a few birds properly packed, and attending to them carefully.

These were always healthy, and were eagerly bought. They soon dispelled the idea that the roup belonged to the breed, and proved it was caused only by mismanagement, and by treatment that rendered health impossible. The anxiety to possess foreign birds for the sake of fresh blood, and often for their beautiful plumage, had caused the diseased birds to be bought (because it must be borne in mind, till the disease declared itself they often appeared in perfect health), and they spread it wherever they went. To such an extent did it prevail, that it was not uncommon to see many empty pens at a show, bearing a label, stating the birds were removed being diseased.

Those that were brought over and carefully treated, came in perfect health and remained so. The disease was not natural to the birds, but entirely caused by the injudicious treatment, and the same result would appear to fowls of any breed subject to the roup, if they were treated as the Dutch fowls were originally. Now, however, roup is laughed at, and never assumes the virulent form it did some years ago. It may, however, not be necessary to give a word of advice as to the best treatment for it. Where the first bird attacked is neither a valuable nor an important one, we should always stamp out the disorder, by breaking the patient's neck. When it is desirable to save the bird, the

symptoms must be taken early. They are a strange noise seeming to come from the throat, a discharge from the nostrils, and a dull unnatural demeanour. Such a bird should at once be put in solitary confinement, in a dry place sheltered from draughts. It should here be treated with castor oil, a tablespoonful at a time, some pills of camphor the size of a garden pea, and bread and ale. If, however, you have them, we advise our pills for this disorder. The bird's face and nostrils should be washed with vinegar and water. In disorders, the first step is to give opening medicine. Castor oil is the best and safest, the dose for an adult should be a tablespoonful. To whatever other remedy may be used, we always add camphor, one pill the size of a garden pea per diem. We also put camphor in their water. It prevents the disorder from spreading.

Where fowls seem to waste without there being any visible cause, cod liver oil, two teaspoons full per day, and sulphate of iron in the proportion of an ounce to a quart of water, are both excellent remedies.

Gapes often depopulate a yard. The bad effect they take on the birds develops itself so rapidly, that unless some remedy that is immediately active can be applied, the bird dies from exhaustion. Camphor provides all that is requisite. It is a powerful vermi-

fuge, it is instant in its operation, and it pervades the entire system of the patient. As soon as the chicken begins to gape with outstretched neck, it is death or cure in a few days or hours. There is no direct access to the bottom of the windpipe; therefore the only means of reaching it, is by the administration of something that will attack by its odour. Two pills of camphor, each rather less than a garden pea, should be given to the chicken. It lies for a time in the crop, close to the seat of the disorder, and as in that time the odour of the camphor pervades the whole body of the patient, it reaches parasites and kills them. No general remedy or medicine is of any use against this disorder. We believe these worms are identical with those to be found in rain-water butts. For that reason we never use rain water for poultry. A running stream is the best water. Failing that, use spring water. We have no doubt gapes have their origin in bad and impure water. Sometimes a fowl will droop suddenly, although previously in robust health. As a rule this arises from something that has hardened in the crop. Pour down warm water till it is softened. Then give a table spoonful of castor oil, or about as much jalap as will lie on a shilling, mixed in butter; make a pill of it, and slide it into the crop. The fowl will be well in the morning. If the crop still

remain hard after this, an operation is the only remedy. The feathers should be picked off the crop in a straight line down the middle, and a careful cut made with a sharp knife. Generally speaking, the crop will be found full of grass or hay, that has formed a ball or some inconveniently-shaped substance. (I once took a piece of carrot three inches long out of a crop.) When the offence has been removed, the crop should be washed out with warm water. It should then be sewn up with coarse thread, and the suture rubbed with grease. Afterwards the outer skin should be served the same. The crop and skin must not be sewed together. For three or four days the patient should have only gruel; no hard food for a fortnight. Cayenne pepper or chalk, or both, mixed with meal, are the best remedies for scouring.

When fowls are restless, dissatisfied, and continually scratching, it is often caused by lice. These can be got rid of by supplying their houses and haunts with plenty of ashes, especially wood ashes, in which they may dust themselves, and the bath is rendered more effectual by adding some black sulphur to the dust.

It must be borne in mind, all birds must have the bath. Some use water, some dust; but both, from the same instinctive knowledge of its necessity.

Where a shallow stream of water runs across a gravel road, it will be found full of small birds washing. Where a bank is dry and well exposed to the sun, birds of all kinds will be found burying themselves in dust.

Sometimes fowls appear cramped ; they have difficulty in standing upright, and rest on their knees. In large young birds, especially cocks, this is merely the effect of weakness from fast growth, and the difficulty their long weak legs have in carrying their bodies. But if it lasts after they are getting age, then it must be seen to. If their roosting place has a wooden, stone, or brick floor, there is the cause ; but if this is not the case, stimulating food, such as I have described for other diseases, must be given. Fowls, like human beings, are subject to atmospheric influence ; and if healthy fowls seem suddenly attacked with illness that cannot be explained, a copious meal of bread steeped in ale will often prove a speedy and effectual remedy. For adults, nothing will restore strength sooner than eggs boiled hard, and chopped fine. If these remedies are not successful, then the constitution is at fault, and good healthy cocks must be sought to replace those whose progeny is faulty.

It is hardly out of place here to treat of the necessity of introducing fresh blood, where the

object is to have none but the best stock. Breeding in-and-in is fatal to excellence, and it is also unprofitable. Take an example from one of the best amateurs in the first half of this century. He put a few pairs of black pigeons in a loft, and allowed them to breed without any introduction of fresh blood. They were well and carefully fed. At the end of two years an account of them was taken. They had greatly multiplied, but only one-third of the number were black, and the others had become spotted with white, then patched, and then quite white, while these latter had not only lost the characteristics of the breed from which they descended, but they were weak and deformed in every possible way. The introduction of fresh blood prevents all this; and the breeder for prizes, or who wishes to have the best of the sort he keeps, should never let a fowl escape him if it possesses the qualities he seeks. It is not easy, even where expense is not considered, to get a bird so perfect as to make him a desirable addition to a yard. When, therefore, such an one is seen, it should be immediately secured, although, perhaps, not wanted for two months.

Believing roup to be the greatest bane of the poultry yard, we cannot rejoice too much that we have got rid of it; but our acquisitions in the way of diseases are almost as trying, although not fatal.

First, we have elephantiasis—a growth of hideous scurfy scales or excrescences on the legs and toes, increasing with age till they look like small oyster shells placed one over the other with projecting edges. This can seldom be cured, and the only hope of meeting it successfully, is by treating it at the very outset in the following way. Make a brush of tail feathers, and with it thoroughly lubricate the legs with sweet oil several times per day ; at night and at early morning, dress them with common spermaceti ointment. The other complaint is that of feather picking. In certain breeds ; Spanish, Crèveœur and Houdans being the worst, when the hot weather comes on, and the plumage gets shabby, showing the skin here and there, there arises in fowls an irrepressible desire to eat each other's feathers. They will continue to do so, till only wing and tail feathers are left. The only way to prevent this, is to seize the culprits one after the other and put them in solitary confinement. It may sometimes be prevented by detecting the offender at the outset and removing her at once. It always begins with one, but the others soon learn it. Unless they are shut up separately, they will continue this habit until the new plumage shows itself, when they will give it up for eight months. It is incurable. The growth, however, of feathers on the bare spots

will be helped by rubbing them with compound sulphur ointment. We have never met with either of these two disorders except in fowls that were confined. It is much wished by many who are not well off for room and conveniences, to keep almost as many fowls as those who are possessors of "broad acres." Much may be done by attention and by adhering to natural and wholesome foods, but nothing should be given of which the component parts are not known to those who use them. Stimulating things are frequently good as medicines; but they, like the egg-laying powders in favor many years ago, leave sad traces of their having been given, where they are used as articles of food.

Sometimes there are complaints of soft eggs being laid. As these cases are rare we shall not bestow much time on them. Either the necessary materials for making the shell are wanting, or the organs of the bird are out of order. It is never a serious, and seldom a lasting complaint. The first condition may be met by providing that which lacks—lime or chalky substances. You can give it in no better form than in that of Bricklayer's rubbish, consisting of lumps of lime and mortar, old ceilings, &c. They will among this find all that is necessary for the formation of shell. In the second condition all that is necessary is to give a tablespoonful of castor oil

every other day for a week. Double eggs are sometimes laid. We cannot say how this is to be prevented. It was long imagined these eggs were useless for sitting; but it was a mistake, many such have hatched, and I have two perfect chickens attached to two yolks preserved in spirits of wine. There is one thing, not a disease but a sort of accident, that should be mentioned. A fowl, most frequently a pullet, stands upright like a Penguin duck, with her tail touching the ground. She is egg-bound, and cannot get rid of the egg that has come to maturity. The treatment is to pull out a wing feather, to saturate it well with oil (castor oil the best), and to introduce it *gently* into the egg passage till it reach the egg. It will be laid directly, except in a very obstinate case. In such the use of the oiled feather must be continued, and in extreme cases it may be necessary to touch and move the egg, but in such a case you cannot be too careful. If the egg be broken it can never be got out, and the bird must die.

It is worthy of note that none of the Asiatic breeds are subject to Roup, nor are the Spanish. These latter when imported formerly were not uncommonly attacked with "Black Rot." The white face shrivelled and became covered with a dark powder. The whole body perished till the skin

darkened and dried on the bones. It was always fatal in about three weeks. They are also subject to swelled faces: these become perfectly hard, and although the bird may live for a time there is no cure. There are other incurable disorders. We do not name them as many of them are unpleasant even to describe.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY hatched chickens are more easily reared than those that come into the world later. We would if we could, hatch all we wanted before the end of February. There are two difficulties. Eggs are scarce, and sitting hens are scarcer. Sometimes we can find only nine eggs to put under a hen; needs must, and we are content with nine. The hen probably brings off seven. They are as many as she can rear properly at that time of the year. Long, dreary, cold nights. The chickens want all the warmth the hen can give them, and as they grow she cannot cover a larger number. Even at this early season it is advisable to set three hens at the same time. They may sit in baskets, boxes, or half

butter-tubs, but they should have no bottoms, the straw of which the nest is composed should rest on the earth. At all times eggs that are under hens should be wetted with cold water once per day after seven or eight days' sitting, while the hen is off. It may be done by dipping the hand in water and wringing it several times over the eggs. The success in hatching depends much on this. The natural explanation of it is, that a bird in a state of nature when sitting on eggs leaves them in all weathers at day-break to feed. Her search leads her on the grass, sometimes drenched with rain, sometimes covered with heavy dew. She returns to her eggs thoroughly wetted through her breast feathers, and in that state takes to her eggs again. This is of daily occurrence, yet she seldom fails to hatch. The reason why it is desirable to put three hens on eggs the same day is, that the eggs may be accurately tested a few days before hatching by putting them in warm water. If you fill a pail, and put as many eggs as you can, or as will cover the surface of the water, you will soon detect a disposition to kick or wobble on the part of those containing live chickens, so unmistakeable indeed that you need not hesitate to replace them in the nest. You must not be in a hurry to condemn those that are longer in giving evidence, but any that remain a long time without

moving, are bad. By these means all the good eggs can be put under two of the hens, and fresh eggs under the other. Thus you ensure (accidents excepted) two full broods, and you gain the services of a hen.

There is also another method, assuming that three hens have each been put on a seat of eggs, it is easy at the end of a week to ascertain those that will produce chickens. If there be sun strong enough for the operation, form a telescope by the two hands closed to exclude light. Place the egg in the end of the outermost hand, and bring it consequently nearest to the sun, look through the other hand, and bring the egg in direct line with the light. The first rudiment will be seen in a long, dark formation in the egg. When the sun is weak, and advantage must be taken of every help that is at hand, the operation is facilitated by performing it in a dark outhouse, when, the door being partially opened, a streak of sunshine is admitted between the door and its post. Using the same system, the egg must be brought close to the opening and the formation will be seen, but not as fully as when the sun has more power.

One thing is certain, where, at the end of a week or ten days, there is no visible change, there will be no result in the way of chicken.

Hens must not be off their eggs as long in winter and in frosty weather as in summer. In fact, in hard weather the less they are off the better. We always put more straw to a winter than a spring nest. As soon as the eggs begin to hatch the empty shells should be taken away. Another basket should be ready with clean straw, into which hen and chickens should be put. The latter want no food or care for the first twelve hours, beyond that the hen will give them. After that the hen may be put under a rip such as we have described at page 29 with her chickens. Before we treat of their food, we must put in a plea for the hen. Let her be well fed and cared for. She has earned it, and she will make a good return. We are supposing the chickens are hatched in January; at that time we give them no water to drink, we give them only beer for the first three months. Till they are seven or eight weeks old we keep them in a very large light barn, the floor of which is covered with dry road-grit. They are supplied daily with sods of growing grass, which they devour readily. The food should be boiled egg chopped fine; bread and milk; dough made with ground oats; curd; cooked meat chopped fine (especially the pieces of fat that are so unpopular among children), we prefer fat to lean meat for this purpose.

During the first fortnight they should be fed a little at a time every hour. From that time, as they get stronger, the number of meals may be diminished. Although the food after they are a month old may be less troublesome and less expensive, still there must be variety. They quickly tire of the same food, and if they once become dissatisfied it is difficult to overcome it.

It is necessary to lessen or withdraw the food judiciously. Nothing is so unprofitable as see-saw feeding. Neglecting the chickens, or reducing their food, so that they show it in their drooping condition, and then supplying and pampering with everything that can be thought of. Growing chickens, like children, require good food and plenty, but neither should want pampering; a hungry, growing boy wants food oftener than a middle-aged man. It is the same with a chicken. The progress of this latter should never have a check.

Broody hens are very much abused, at one time because they are so scarce, at another because they are so numerous. At Christmas or in January it is often impossible to get one for love or money. At the end of May every one is asking those who are supposed to be authorities, what will cure a hen of the desire to sit?

No economy is so mistaken as that which refuses

an extra shilling or two for an early sitter. It is sometimes said there is uncertainty in their sitting when they get to a strange place. A broody hen should always be moved in the dark. She should be put in a bag or basket with plenty of soft straw, that she may keep warm. If several are to be moved at the same time, they may all be put in a basket rather too small for them. The closer they are the better, provided they are not suffocated. They should at once be put in a quiet, darkish place, each in a box, basket, or tub, from which it cannot escape, and provided with dumb eggs. By these we mean either composition or useless eggs. It is always a wise precaution to put a hen on such for the first twenty-four hours. Young hens often profess to be broody, but desert after a day and a night's confinement. It does not of necessity follow that a hen will sit closely during the whole period because she is very anxious and fussy at the outset. She may sit hollow, or she may (if space permit) stand up in her basket. Such an one often spoils her eggs during the three first days, and is afterwards an exemplary sitter. All the fault is then laid to the eggs, whereas it belongs to the hen.

There will be a satisfactory hatch and strong chickens if these rules be observed: quiet, cleanliness, and good feeding. The hens should be taken

from their eggs at the same time every day. It is hard to fix an exact period. They may be off during ten minutes in the winter, and half-an-hour in the summer. Many hens will not keep so long off their eggs, and as there is nothing to be gained by thwarting them, let them return to their nests as soon as the purposes for which they left have been attained. Every nest should be examined while the hen is off. There is sometimes a broken or a damaged egg. It should be at once removed. It either sticks to the other eggs, or, still worse, to the feathers of the hen. This often leads to the loss of a whole sitting.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE are two methods of fattening: one is by feeding in troughs—these are called peckers; another is by cramming. Where merely a good useful fowl is required, the first process will suffice; but when it is wished to make a fowl equal to those found in the London market, the second must be resorted to. In both cases such a coop or pen as I will endeavour to describe will be required.

A coop for twelve fowls should be twenty-four

inches high, three feet long, and twenty-two inches deep ; it should stand about two feet from the ground, the front made of bars of about two inches apart, the bottom also made of bars about an inch and a half apart to ensure cleanliness, and made to run the length of the coop, so that the fowl constantly stands, when feeding or resting, in the position of perching ; the sides, back, and top, indeed, the whole of the coop should be made of bars as in the sketch. The bars of which it is made should be an inch and a half wide, and should be round. Fattening fowls do not require much room ; exercise is not favourable to the process ; and it is, therefore, important that the room given to each bird should be only so much as will enable it to stand up or sit in tolerable comfort. More than this retards the operation. For this reason there are two slides to the coop. These not only make the task of catching the fowls much easier, but they are very useful when the coop is wanted for a smaller number of birds. If only four are required, and they have the same space allowed to them as to twelve, they will make little progress. It is, therefore, necessary to have a board or division made, which, by passing between the bars from front to back, will make a coop of the size required.

For pecking there should be a trough in front of

the coop; it should be wedge-shaped, thus. It is easier to clean than a square one. It only requires a flat board, running along the front of the coop, having a groove cut in it to receive the bottom of the trough, and an upright piece at the edge to support it. It is easily moveable, which is necessary, as it must be scalded once every day to keep it sweet.



This trough must be filled three times a day with food, the quantity being regulated by the number of fowls fattening; the food should be oatmeal mixed slack, but not quite liquid, the consistence being such that if some of it were placed on the flat board in front of the coop, although it would spread, it would not run off. It may be mixed with water, but milk is much better; in fact, it should always be borne in mind, the food cannot be too good or too

clean. It is also essentially necessary that sound discretion be used in the quantity of food given ; no more should be given than is eaten up clean at a time, and at every meal it should be fresh mixed food ; when the time arrives for the mid-day feed, if there remain any uneaten from the morning in the trough, it is a proof that either too much was given before, or that the fowls are sick : if the first, let them fast till the evening ; if the second, alter the character of the food, by mixing it either slacker or stiffer ; but in both cases the food which has been left must be taken away, or it will turn sour, and the fowls will take a distaste for it, which will prevent their fattening. There should be pans continually before them containing fresh clean water, and when the troughs are removed for scalding, and while they are drying, there should be gravel spread on the ledge before them ; they will pick out the small stones to assist digestion, which greatly promotes their health.

Another very excellent thing is to cut a turf well covered with grass, and place occasionally before them. No better proof will be required of this being good for them than the avidity with which it will be eaten. All these things assist health, and for a fowl to be good on the table it must be healthy when alive. By this process a fowl put up in good flesh

and condition will be fat enough for ordinary purposes in about ten or fourteen days.

It will be observed I inculcate the greatest cleanliness throughout. Cleanliness is one essential; another that the fowls be fed early in the morning, as soon as the sun rises, for they will be then waiting for their food. If the first meal of a fowl is deferred till seven or eight o'clock on a summer's day, the bird has been hungry, restless, and dissatisfied four hours, and in that time the progress made towards fattening the previous day has been fretted away.

This remark applies both to pecking and the succeeding method of fattening.

The next process is cramming. The coop must be precisely similar to that used for peckers. The number of these coops must depend on the supply of fowls that is required, as they should not always be in use lest they become tainted. They are so inexpensive and so easily made it is not worth while to incur any risk of this sort, and after one has been in use for a month, it is always well that it should be washed, exposed to the air for as long a time as it can be spared, and if lime-whited so much the better.

The fowls for cramming are put in this coop, and if wanted very fat in a short time, the best of those

fed by the former process may be selected, and in a week they will be very good ; but if not in a hurry then good fleshy young fowls should be put up and fed as follows ; but (in this and the former method) care must be taken to put up fowls that have been accustomed to be together : if strange fowls are put in the same coop they will fight, and, if so, they will not fatten ; nor is that all, from the continual excitement they will become hard. It will sometimes happen even a pullet is quarrelsome, if so, she must be taken from the coop and kept separate, or she will interfere with the well doing of the lot. If fowls are to thrive, they must be warm. The heat and steam of the birds should be perceptible to the hand when it is put in. For this purpose they must be close to each other, and the coop should be covered up with old sacks, carpet, matting, or anything of the sort.

The food is the same as before, viz., oatmeal mixed with milk, and if it is wished to make the fowls very fat, a little mutton suet may be boiled in the milk with which the oatmeal is slaked ; the only difference being, it is mixed stiffer, it must now retain the form given to it. A cram should be about the size of a woman's finger and an inch and a half long, six or eight are given morning and evening, they are enough to fill the fowl's crop.

The crams should be rolled up as dry as possible, and in order to render the swallowing easy, previous to being given, they should be dipped in milk or pot-liquor; women perform this operation better than men; the fowl is placed in the lap, the head is held up, and the beak being kept open with the thumb and finger, the cram is introduced into the gullet, the beak is then closed, and the cram is gently assisted down till it reaches the crop; care must be taken not to pinch the throat, as ulceration would follow, and the fowl would be spoiled. If at mid-day the fowls appear restless and dissatisfied a very little food may be given to them in the same way as to peckers. They must also be well supplied with water and gravel.

It will sometimes happen that when the time arrives for the evening meal, that of the morning has not digested; therefore, before the second feed is given, the crop should be lightly felt to see if it be empty; if it is not, there is proof something is wrong; the fowl must be taken out immediately, and the beak being held open, as if for cramming, some warm water or gruel should be poured down the throat, and the beak closed: the bird will swallow it, and it will soften the food, but if more food were forced into the crop, on that already hardening there, the fowl would become crop-bound; *i.e.*, the

food would become solid and indigestible, and the fowl would be totally spoiled for the table, if it did not die.

By the foregoing process a fowl may be made perfectly fat and good in fourteen to sixteen days; there is no necessity to feed longer, unless large size be desired, when feeding may be continued three weeks; the former period is preferable, because the fowl then is fat enough and in perfect health, but frequently afterwards, although it will get fatter and apparently larger, it will lose both weight and flesh; the latter becomes red and dry, the internal fat impedes the exercise of the functions of digestion, and the fowl becomes diseased; it is what poulterers term "clung," and arises from disease of the liver, caused by excessive fat.

There is no possible method by which a fowl may be kept fattening and in perfect health after it has reached the acmè of fatness; it must then be killed, or it will become worthless.

When put up, either for pecking or cramming, the birds must be in some sort of building, completely sheltered from cold and draughts; when the weather is chilly they should be covered with sacks or matting, as warmth is very essential in causing them to thrive.

That which is here called oatmeal is, in reality,

ground oats. They were at one time peculiar to Sussex, but they are now to be had in many parts of Surrey. They form the best poultry food we ever met with. They are made by using grinding-stones dressed in a peculiar way. Ground at an ordinary mill, oats slaked for feeding appear like sawdust and chaff mixed. Fowls will not even look at them; but although *nothing whatever* is removed from these, yet, with proper management, they mix smoothly enough to make a pudding for the table, and a very nice change for breakfast. All animals like them.

The foregoing process will fatten a fowl, but more than that is required. It must be tender. Two things are necessary to accomplish that—it *must* be young, and it *should* be kept some time after it is killed.

Fowls should be put up to fatten at from twelve to fourteen weeks old in the summer, and from sixteen to twenty in the winter. The cause for this difference is two-fold: they do not grow as fast in the winter as in the summer either in size or towards maturity, and they can be kept a longer or shorter time after death, according to temperature. Under ordinary circumstances, the superiority of a large fowl over a small one is that it supplies more food, but both should be of the same quality. (Nothing

will make an old fowl tender if boiled or roasted in the ordinary way, but differently treated it may become excellent food, and at the risk of getting out of our depth, we will, at the end of this chapter, give the history of a most succulent dish, made from old poultry.) At whatever time of year a fowl is killed one of two things is necessary—either it must be cooked hot before it stiffens, in the Eastern fashion, or it must be kept long enough for the rigidity to pass away. To attain this object, the bird must be thoroughly fasted, absolutely kept without *food* or *water* for twelve or fourteen hours before being killed. It is the food and water in the body that cause them to spoil. In hot weather a fowl taken from food and water and killed, will not keep more than twelve or fourteen hours. One that has been fasted, will keep thirty-six. This does not matter so much with young poultry in the summer. The stiffness passes away, and the fowl may be drawn a few hours after death, and eaten in the evening. With the middle-aged and with fowls of a “certain age” it is essential they should be kept. If fasted in the way we have described a fowl may in the winter be kept ten or twelve days. The fowl will not only be improved, but it enables the house-keeper always to have a good dish to fall back upon. It is a poor poultry yard where there are not always

some fowls fit to kill, and in country districts, where the butcher often ranks among the "desiderata," two fowls form a desirable reserve. Fowls may be killed very young, and yet be of very useful proportions. It is a question of feeding from the shell. Where chickens are amply fed on proper food, they are always fleshy, but, sometimes, growth is so rapid, that little flesh is made. It is then easy to put up a couple every week to feed by pecking. It is surprising to see the change in them in from ten days to a fortnight. Being shut up, kept warm, well fed, and having no exercise, they put on flesh daily. They are a little restless at first, and should, therefore, have only as much room as will enable them to stand up, and to shift their position. As they become reconciled, and the food tells upon them, they care less for outdoor life; they doze away the time except when they are feeding, and in feeder's phrase they put on fat.

Having arrived at a tolerably correct idea of the number of birds that will be required, only such should be put up. When they are fattened, there is no process by which they can be kept going on, even though they may still add fat, they lose flesh and weight, and become bad birds. Nor do they ever thrive profitably if they are turned out after being fattened. In a family where four fowls are required

for the weekly consumption it is better to have three small fattening coops, and to put four in each at different periods, so that the demand will be always met. This applies, of course, only to private feeding. Where there is a market for good poultry the coops should be full, but not inconveniently so. They keep each other warm, and warmth is a great help; in fact, wherever fowls are doing well under this or the following process, they should feel in a perspiration when the hand is put in.

The mode of death is a somewhat disputed question. Abroad the custom is to cut the throat. It is, undoubtedly, a speedy and a certain death. In England, among those who provide table poultry of the best description, fowls, turkies, and pigeons are all killed by breaking their necks. The best authorities are of opinion poultry killed by this process are better for eating, inasmuch as they are juicier than those killed by bleeding. We believe they are. Little or nothing can be said on the score of humanity. If the fowl or turkey be taken by the legs with the left hand, and the head being held backwards against the right thigh with the right hand, and then gently pulled downwards, the breaking of the neck is distinctly felt, and death is almost instantaneous. The body should be held head downwards for a minute or two to allow the blood to

leave the body. A fowl should be picked while warm. The operation *then* occupies only half the time it will afterwards, and the skin will not tear. A fowl that is picked at once will keep much longer than one that is allowed to remain unplucked till it is wanted.

CHAPTER X.

IN treating of Exhibition Poultry, the question has become so well understood that much less need be said now than was necessary even a few years ago. The general rules that have to be followed when the best poultry is required for the table may be safely observed when breeding for prizes in those breeds where size is one of the principal points. The chicken that has become a large fowl in June may be trusted, if all go well, to be a very large one in November.

It is necessary to hatch early, but this does not entail so much trouble as people may imagine. As the nights at that time of year are long, and the days proportionably short, it will be plain that the feeding given during the eight hours of daylight will

not suffice to nourish and to supply warmth and growth during the sixteen hours of night. It is, therefore, necessary to feed twice after darkness has come on. This is done for the chickens that have no other distinction before them but to become spring chickens, and to be eaten with asparagus. How much more when first prizes and cups are to be gained. Say that daylight is at an end at four o'clock, and the heartiest meal possible has been given at that time. The hen and chickens should be under a rip in a barn or outhouse, or some other spot quite sheltered from cold or draught. It will be covered at night in front with sacks or carpet, or such like, and against them a board will be made to stand upright. It should be a dark one, and when the time has arrived for the first nocturnal feed, let the board be then put on the ground and the food placed on it—being curd, egg, or bread and milk, it will easily be seen. Raise part of the covering, so as to expose the food, and let the light of the candle or lanthorn fall upon it; then call the chickens; they will feed and return to the hen. Let there be food enough for the hen at the same time. After once or twice she will then detect the faint glimmer of light, and will call the chickens. Let this operation be performed again the last thing before going to bed. They should also be fed in the same manner

before daylight, and as the chickens grow, and the days lengthen, they will not want as much attention. This extra care is only wanted for very early chickens. Later birds have Nature on their side, and she is a good nurse. As the year goes on, the nights get shorter, and the sun gains power, two essentials for poultry growth.

As the early spring is the time when poultry is worth the most money for the table, the care we have inculcated will not be all lost if some of the chickens show defects that will unfit them for exhibition. Such should be immediately devoted to table or market. There is no hope of success with a faulty bird. Reserve all your care for perfect ones. Your very early chickens will be wanted only for summer and early autumn shows. For the last month of the year, those hatched in March will probably do all that can be expected from them. Where many fowls are bred from a good stock, and kept in a farmyard where there is all necessary food, we should let all run together, though we intended to exhibit. We should be very mindful of one thing, viz., that there was plenty of food for them. That will only be where ricks are being taken in, and where threshing is going on. When nothing of the sort is about, a farmyard may be positively destitute of food. Granting, however, they have all that is

requisite, we would rather give them an unlimited range than confine them. We are so strongly of this opinion that we would if necessary give them the yard for a run, and feed them as we should if they were kept in a pen. There is one advantage in this—it gets the fowls together, and a better judgment (so far as sight is concerned) can be formed when they are together than when they are taken singly.

When seeking for birds of a breed, where size and weight are among the chief desiderata, do not allow yourself to be caught by the precocity of certain chickens, that already look like early cocks and hens. There will never be much size and weight in them. Choose large-framed roomy chickens, loose and apparently overgrown. If you catch such an one, and handle it, you will be surprised at the width across the back from hip to hip, also at the length. Choose a large childish-looking head and face. All these things promise growth, and they will redeem their promise if they are well fed. You may perhaps feel disappointed at a certain lack of weight, and you may think they are very thin, but you must recollect the food has gone to make muscle and frame-work. It has given you the outline you wanted, and as soon as growth has ceased, it will fill it up. Fat is not what is wanted, even in the

breeds where weight is one of the chief points. It makes a fowl lazy and listless. It makes loose feathering. It does not come well into the judge's hands, and it gives a quiet and sheepish look to a bird that is by no means a help to success. When the eye of a judge is attracted to a pen, and he stands in front of it, he should see birds in startling condition that come to the front of the pen in answer, as it were, to his challenge. This is what birds in first-rate condition will do, and this is what exhibitors should strive to accomplish. A fattened sleepy pen beside them, tenanted by a pair that will barely move when poked with a stick, will probably never be noticed or handled, and their lumpiness and weight will be unknown save to the owner.

So much for weight; but feather is quite as important. Not only should a fowl be shown with all his feathers, but they should be in perfect condition. The plumage of a fowl should be clean, bright and firm. As a rule, where fowls have a decent run, their feathers are clean. If they are not, they may be washed. Soap and water is all that is necessary; a piece of soft flannel is the best thing to use it with. As it is only the outside that is dirty, it need only be wiped gently down the right way of the feather. Generally one wiping is sufficient to remove any dirt that has been recently got; but

whether it be one or two wipings, the flannel should then be rinsed in clean water, and the feathers should be wiped with it. The fowl should then be put in an open basket with plenty of soft oat straw in it. When there is sun in the autumn sufficiently powerful to dry the plumage, all that is requisite is to put the basket where the fowl will have the full benefit of it. In winter and when the sun is cloudy or unseen, it is better to put the bird before a fire, being as far from it as may be consistently with the necessity of having heat enough to dry the plumage. But the plumage should be hard, and look as though shots would rattle against it. Condition will do much towards accomplishing this. The old school of cock-fighters always gave peas to harden feather. There are few things better than good heavy barley. Hemp and canary should be avoided; they make fat, produce fever, and ruin plumage. A small quantity of buck wheat may be given at times if the fowls like it, many of the foreign fowls have been used to it. The legs and beak of a fowl that is intended to be among the first should also be washed; this is such a simple matter the suggestion will be enough. When the shows draw nigh, the birds that are to be exhibited should have every advantage of food for ten or twelve days. They will put on weight. But not only must they have every advan-

tage of food, but they must become acquainted with and used to each other. In early days, when a pen consisted of a cock and three hens, or as afterward, a cock and two hens, it was common to see one or two in a pen completely scalped by the others.

Now cocks are shown alone, pullets also; but there are some shows where a pen is made up of both sexes, and others where hens and pullets are shown in pairs. It cannot be denied that poultry of all sorts has its likes and antipathies. The general peace of a yard or run does not imply that all its inhabitants live in concord. Their good understanding lasts as long as there is plenty of room for them to avoid each other, and they do not come in contact; but if two are put in a small space together without any previous introduction, it will be often found one has spoiled the other, and with it their owner's hope of success. There is not even the shade of competition where two disfigured birds are shown with a plank of division between them, against two that agree together, although, perhaps, these latter are inferior to them.

The birds that are to go together should be first shut up in a small space for a short time, then, during some days, for an increasing period, in a pen as much like those in use at exhibitions as possible. They should be fed in this, and if they continue to

agree, they may then be shown in company. It is useless to believe that if there is any appearance of discord when they are first put together, that a short association will overcome it. It is rare to see two hens fight when they are put in a small space, but you will often see one raise herself on tip-toe till she overlooks the other, and then begin the attack. The weaker does not seek to defend herself, but tries to escape. When she finds that impossible, she will thrust her head into a corner and stand still while the other eats her entire scalp, and, if let alone, a great part of her neck.

To ensure success fowls should be quite clean—beak, legs and plumage. They should be sent to shows in round baskets; they should be high enough to allow the cock to stand upright. This is not necessary only for the comfort of the bird, but in many breeds it may exercise no slight influence on the success of the pen. The comb of a Spanish cock confined for some hours in a basket that is too low to allow him to stand upright, may well suffer, and be found to “lop” a little when he comes before the judges, and the top-knot of a Polish cock may lose its symmetry from the same continued rubbing. Instead of wicker lids, these baskets should be covered with stout canvas, and it is often a wise precaution to have it double and to stuff it with hay

or soft straw. It is almost impossible for a fowl so packed to suffer injury. The bottom of the basket should at all times be well covered with straw. In the heat of summer and part of autumn, wheat straw is the best, and a small quantity suffices; but in cold weather there should be a plentiful supply of oat straw. It keeps the fowls warm during their journey, and there are draughts even in guards' vans. Much injury is often done to birds by being left on railway platforms in severe weather. Fowls should, if it be convenient, travel by night, reaching their destination in the morning. It enables those who have the management of the show to unpack them carefully and at leisure, and they feed by daylight. They should be well fed before they start; it should be soft food. Ground oats or barley-meal slaked with milk, or bread sopped in milk or water, are both good. This is important, as they will be in hot competition in a few hours. It is difficult for them to digest hard food in a basket, and indigestion means tame and listless manner, combined with blackened comb, dull plumage, and all the appearances of discomfort. No success for such as these.

It would seem almost unnecessary to mention certain things as elements of success in exhibiting, but as the lack of them is enough to cause defeat,

and it may happen that some, even now, might overlook or forget such trifles, they should be mentioned. Where two birds are shown together, they should match in every particular. In size, color and age. The legs must especially be well matched in color. A certain shade of blue and a certain shade of willow may seem positively alike at a small distance, but if such are among the few from which the successful birds will be taken, and they are taken out to be examined; their hope of success is gone.

When fowls return from a show, if they are in good health "let well alone." If they are dull and suffering from discomfort, if their combs be dark and their crops hard, give a table spoonful of castor oil at once. When under treatment for this or any other ailment, the patients should always be separated from the other birds.

We will conclude this chapter with one more remark. The intention to exhibit is a thing resolved upon months before it is carried into effect. The competing birds are for a long time known, distinguished, and looked at every day. Barring accidents, and granting that when they are handled they will redeem the promise they made when they were running about, it is probable the first judgment was a correct one, and those first fixed upon will be entrusted with the honor of the yard. Where all are

running together, the failure of one or more to meet requirements is of small importance; but when they are in confinement if you would be sure of four good birds, you *must* put up eight. Sometimes a bird will go wrong; sometimes when in confinement it will not realize the hopes it raised; and sometimes it meets an accident.

CHAPTER XI.

As in previous editions we have always at the end given tables of the points of the different breeds; and as we purpose to do the same in this, we shall in giving short notices of the different breeds confine ourselves, so far as may be, to the chief characteristics of each breed, or to such details as may be interesting or instructive to those who read these pages.

DORKING.—No bird can touch the Dorking for positive utility. It is essentially the table fowl. Many expedients have been resorted to, in the way of crosses to improve this fowl, some to make it hardier, some to increase size; but none have succeeded. The quality of the meat, the amount of delicate food compared with that which in this breed

is called from custom only coarse. The weight of meat given in return for the food consumed, the early age at which it is done, and the small part played by bone in making up the weight of the body, all concur in placing it at the head of table fowls. It has a larger proportion of white meat on the breast than any other, its back is covered with delicious succulent meat, and many excellent judges prefer the thigh of a bird of this breed to any other part. Many will doubt this description; but if they will once purchase a fattened Sussex Dorking, (they may do so without extravagance in August or September,) they will then admit the correctness of all that has been said. Those who have not yet tasted such a fowl, do not know what choice poultry is.

The Dorking is *quite* an average layer, a good sitter, an excellent mother. To bring out all the good properties of the breed, the chickens must be well fed from the beginning, and the better the food, the better they will thrive. It may be thought and said it is an expensive bird, but it is not so in reality. Our theory in all feeding is, that very often the most expensive is the cheapest, if the money be carefully laid out, and the food properly administered. Granted that to attain the perfection of poultry, the outlay on a Dorking chicken in four months, will be

as great as that on a "rough" in five, there remains this advantage; you have an excellent symmetrical fowl, as heavy as the other that is a month older, and may be eaten, but should not be seen; the food has been less both in bulk and cost, because the bird has lived a month less. If it were desired to test the merits of a Dorking against any other table fowl, let both be taken to a market, let a shilling more be asked for the Dorking, and we will undertake to say it will be sold first.

The Dorking must have a range, and no place suits so well as a good farm-yard. They are busy at the barn-door when threshing is going on. They like to search under or around ricks. They will go fields away from home in search of worms when ploughing is going on. They are foragers, and must therefore have room; but if it is attempted to keep them in confinement, they will not succeed.

The Dorking is of exquisite shape, and of dignified appearance, adding to the substantial and comfortable appearance of the homestead where he is located. Good specimens should have deep breasts, broad backs, and short legs. Divested of head, tail, and legs, the body should present a square.

COCHIN CHINA.—Although these birds are, as compared with their predecessors, of very recent intro-

duction, yet they have been long enough before the public, and prominently enough, to render any introduction unnecessary. Let it suffice to say they were ushered into the world with great distinction, and made themselves more talked of than any fowl has done before or since. They were over-praised, over-estimated, and were sold at ridiculous prices. They were then unduly scorned and neglected. To them may be attributed much of the pursuit known in those days as the poultry mania. Time has done them justice, and they have not disappointed those who asked only for moderate and useful things. They supplied a want. Many persons wished to keep fowls, but were prevented from lack of space. A small stable yard in a London mews, or the far end of a narrow suburban garden, found all the conveniences many an ardent amateur possessed to enable him to keep poultry. One breed after another was tried with the wearying result of disappointment. Then it was said Cochin China fowls might be kept anywhere. They were no wanderers: a low fence would keep them, and it would be found they had no desire to wander. They were good layers, good mothers, good sitters, and very hardy. They seemed to supply a need. Those who tried them had no reason to repent it. They were found then as they are now—good, quiet, faithful

servants. Space is thrown away on Cochin China fowls. For a long time we kept a dozen in an orchard of less than an acre, but much of the limited space was never trodden upon by one of them. Their chickens are hatched like young partridges, a fortnight old as compared with other birds. They are easily reared, and we have succeeded without loss when there was snow on the ground. There are several colours of these birds. We will mention them presently, but as the shape and points are alike in each, we will deal with them first.

That which struck every one most, when they were introduced, was their absence of tail, or speaking more correctly, the small ones they had, compared to the other breeds with which we were acquainted. In the cock this appendage should consist of a few curling feathers falling over in a bunch, but any approach to sickle must be carefully avoided.

Another peculiarity is the wing, which, in a perfect specimen, is clipped up so tightly, that the last joint is completely out of sight, hidden under the other wing feathers, and is invisible. After many years experience in and with them, we hardly know what their wings are good for. They do not fly. In both sexes the combs should be scrupulously single, and

that of the hen should have many serrations ; they should also be perfectly upright. They require to be heavily feathered on the leg and the outer toe, but it is not necessary this should amount to a deformity or an eye sore. In this, as in other feathered-legged breeds, the birds should possess this among other properties, but outrageous feathering is too often used to cover defects, and to assume a factitious importance that palliates, if it does not excuse, positive faults. Another peculiarity is the "fluff." It is made up of very soft long feathers, covering the thighs till they project considerably, and garnishing all the hinder part of the body, projecting in all directions. The wings should be clipped up to the body, the ends of the flight feathers being entirely hidden, so that the part of the wing that is visible presents the appearance of an irregular triangle. The hen has no real tail, but a few feathers take the place of it, and are carried slanting. We know few more intelligent heads among the different breeds than that of a well-bred Cochin pullet. But the pleasing expression does not last long, and at two years the beauty is passed away.

The different colours of this breed are buff, lemon, cinnamon, grouse, partridge, white, and black.

We will give particulars of these in their places at the end of the book.

SPANISH.—There was a time when these formed almost the only poultry a man could hope to keep if he lived in a moderate space, such as can be met with in towns and their suburbs. Many will always have a grateful recollection of birds that kept their beautiful appearance, were always in health, and contributed their large snow-white eggs under circumstances of no small difficulty.

Few yards present a more striking appearance than one full of good Spanish. The entirely black plumage, the bright red combs, and the dead white faces, form a pleasing combination, and a remarkable picture. Beauty is not, however, their only recommendation. If not the best, they are among the best layers. Their eggs are very large, having been known sometimes to weigh four and a half ounces each. Many connoisseurs assert they are richer flavoured. As in many other things, there is difference of opinion about eggs; some prefer the cream-coloured shells, such as are laid by the Eastern breeds, others declare they are strong, and will have to do with a white shell only. This is, again, a breed that does not sit. It is an excellent bird for the table, but is rather difficult to rear on account of the slowness with which it feathers when young. They are very naked when hatched, and are often running about with wing feathers only to be seen. They require to

be kept very warm at night when young, and to be well fed. It must not, however, be supposed from these remarks that they are delicate. Far from it, they are among the hardiest of all Gallinacæ. They do not mope in confinement, they are subject to no roup. They are good foragers, and will go far to get their own living if they are not shut up, or if their wings are not cut. Although they are not as much kept as formerly, they are still popular, and intrinsically valuable, provided they are good specimens of their breed. As the points are carefully laid down, and some of them are only fully developed by age, we shall here touch on them. Sex is easily distinguished. At a month, or at most at six weeks old, the cocks are easily to be distinguished from the pullets by their little bright upright combs. White feathers in the wings of the chickens need cause no fear. They are the rule rather than the exception, and disappear with the rest of the chicken plumage. The white face is the great point, and this must be *quite* white—no red can be allowed. There are few birds hatched with a perfectly white face—part of it is always red at first. If, however, it be *entirely* red, there is no hope of excellence. As a rule, as the chicken gains age, the red face disappears before the white, which increases. The last red to be seen in the face of a Spanish pullet is

immediately over the eye, but even this should show spots of white. The deaf ear, or ear-lobe, must not be mistaken for the face. That may be quite white while the face is deep red. The comb is as imperative in the cocks as the face is in the pullets. It must be upright. In the hen it must be hanging over the face. We are thus particular in noting these points, because we know no breed where the weeding or sorting out at the proper time is so full of anxiety. We have known a pullet sold for a few shillings in November, that has been sold for more pounds within twelve months. The truth was, that when weeded, she had not become furnished. This will, however, be a very rare event. There is no such thing as breeding only good birds, and, therefore, the selection must be made of those it is intended to keep. Get rid of every cockerel that has a drooping comb, or one full of sprigs at the back. As the cocks become white faced earlier than the pullets, discard all with partially deep red faces at six months old. Do away with pullets that have half a red face; with both cocks and pullets that have a precocious look of maturity about them. Such have small round white faces. They crow and lay early, and are not worth the food they eat. Choose your birds with long legs, bold carriage, perfect combs, full tails. Take long skinny care-

worn looking faces, often in pullets having a blueish tinge. You must not look for a developed comb in a pullet. It will not take its size or form till she is about to lay. If you are in doubt as to the real merit of a pullet, give her the benefit of it, and keep her; but if she has not justified your indulgence by the time she is twelve months old, get rid of her. She will never be a good bird if anything more than laying is required.

THE BRAHMA POUTRA encountered no small opposition when it first appeared. While some declared it only a Cochin of a different colour, others declared it was inferior to them; while a third class decided they were a manufactured breed, and even described the manner in which they were produced. They were shown for some time in the "various" class, the hot-bed from which so many good breeds have emanated, and where they were first seen. They soon grew too large for their quarters, and had small classes given to them. They rapidly made them large ones, and they are now among the largest of all. We have been told there are still people who doubt their purity. We hardly think it possible.

They were first brought to England from America, although it is said that India is their natural country. The earliest were among the best we ever had; but

a few years ago the English were better than the imported birds. Of late they have neither been as good nor as handsome. Among all hardy fowls these are the hardiest. We have hatched and reared the young ones when there has been snow on the ground for many days together. We have imported them at all seasons and all weathers ; we have kept them in places where they had not (to use a figure of speech) room to move, yet they were never sick nor sorry. They are excellent layers, among the earliest we know. They sit well and are good mothers. They are easily confined by a low fence ; but if there is no fence they will wander a long way from home in search of food. In point of shape they should resemble the Cochins in all respects but one. They should have peacombs. That is, as though there was a principal centre comb, with two similar in shape, but smaller and lower, adhering one on each side to the centre. The colour of the pullets of the dark variety should be grey, delicately and accurately pencilled, with the exception of the hackle, which should be black and white striped. The greatest faults in feather are a tendency in some to light, in others to moss. Both are defects, and should be got rid of. These are more prone to show themselves on the breast and the under part of the neck than elsewhere. For this reason it is always required in

really fine specimens, that they shall be pencilled to the beak. Mossiness, as indistinctness of pencilling is called, is a failing. The legs should be feathered to the end of the outer toe, and if to the middle one, so much the better. It is, however, ridiculous to say that outrageous feathering is necessary for these or for Cochins. It was never so thought twenty years ago. A clean leg was an abomination, but so was a vulture hock; and so it should be now. It is no advantage to a bird. All the Poultry Shows were formed for the improvement of the breed of "domestic poultry," that is, with reference to its usefulness on the table as an article of food. Vulture hocks, or very heavy feathering, will never do this. Far from it, both are nuisances, and add to the labour of preparing the birds for table. These things were never heard of thirty years ago, in the really high and palmy days of the pursuit, when numbers of the Nobility and Gentry were both breeders and exhibitors. We recollect well when a half-bred, very vulture-locked bird was purposely shown among some of the best breeders we had, as "an exaggerated Cochin." Nothing would induce us to tolerate a comparatively clean-legged bird, but we would not accept as a gift the handsomest Cochin or Brahma in the world, if it had heavy vulture hocks.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MALAY FOWL, though formerly much fancied and sought after, has of late years been suffered to decline. It is a long, rather than a large bird, standing remarkably upright, falling in an almost uninterrupted slope from the head to the insertion of the tail, which is small and drooping, having very beautiful, though short, sickle feathers. It has a hard, cruel expression of face, a bold eye, pearled around the edge of the lids, a hard small comb, scarcely so long as the head, and having much the appearance of a double comb trimmed very small and then flattened; a red skinny face, very strong curved beak, and the space for an inch below it on the throat destitute of feathers. It has long yellow legs, quite clean; it is remarkable for very hard plumage, and the hinder parts of the cock look like those of a game cock trimmed for fighting. The hen is of course smaller than the cock; she has the same expression of face, the same curious comb, and in both sexes, the plumage should be so hard, that when handled, it should feel as though one feather covered the whole body; from this cause the wings of the hen are more prominent than in other fowls, projecting like those of a carrier pigeon, though in a

less degree. It is a beauty in these birds if the projections or knobs of flesh at the crop, on the end wing joint, and at the top of the breast, are naked and red. They are good layers and sitters; their eggs have a dark shell, and are said to be superior in flavour to any other.

The original colours were—cocks of a bright rich red, with black breast; and hen of a light chocolate or cinnamon colour, generally one entire shade, but in some instances, the hackles were darker than the rest of the plumage. We have since had beautiful white specimens, and a few years ago there was a handsome breed of them coloured like some of the game piles.

They have a great virtue; they will live anywhere; they will inhabit a back yard of small dimensions: they will scratch in the dust hole, and roost under the water butt; and yet not only lay well, but show in good condition when requisite.

There is a disposition on the part of the public to take to them again. We are glad of it. They did nothing to justify the neglect they have met of late years.

CHAPTER XIII.

GAME FOWLS.—Although there are many different strains of game fowls, the distinctions are so dependent on colour, that the description of one suffices for all, as the points are identical.

All Englishmen have a sort of liking for a game cock, although many abhor cock fighting, and hundreds who dread their combats still cling to the breed. There are two sets of amateurs: one looks only to beauty of plumage; the other, careless of feather, scans closely those points that will tell in the pit. If fowls were not wanted for the table, and if perfect symmetry, beautiful colour, hardihood, and daring, were all that were required of them, the amateur might possess duckwings, piles, or black breasted reds, or any other of the numerous varieties, and rest content. He would indeed be obliged to limit the number of his pets, because the males will not agree; and unless the young cocks are looked upon with pride, as those that are to figure in a main, there is always sadness in seeing sprightly ones growing up, because it is certain they must be got rid of in some way, or they will fight among themselves till but two or three remain. Nor is this propensity confined to cocks; high-bred hens

are quite as pugnacious, and fatal contests between them are things of common occurrence.

The game cock is of bold carriage; his comb is single, bright red, and upright; his face and wattle a beautiful red colour; the expression of countenance fearless, but without the cruelty of the Malay; the eye very full and bright; the beak strong, curved, well fixed in the head, and very stout at the roots. The breast should be full, perfectly straight, the body round in hand, broad between the shoulders, and tapering to the tail, having the shape of a flat-iron. The thighs hard, short, and round, the leg stout, the foot flat and strong, and the spur not high on the leg. The wings are so placed on the body as to be available for sudden and rapid springs. The feathers should be hard, very strong in quills, and, like the Malay, it should seem as though all their feathers were glued together till they felt like one.

A game cock in hand should be what fanciers call "clever," every proportion should be in perfect harmony, and the bird placed on his breast in the palm of the hand should exactly balance.

This is another of those breeds where any deviation from perfection is fatal. It has been well said, "A perfect one is not too good, and therefore an imperfect one is not good enough." Abundant plu-

mage, long soft hackles and saddles, too much tail, or a tail carried squirrel fashion over the back; the least deviation from straightness of the breast-bone, long thighs, in-knees, weak beaks, or coarse heads, are all faults, and should be avoided. These birds are dubbed before they are shown, and this should be neatly performed, every superfluous piece of skin and flesh being removed, so that the head should stand out of the hackle, as though it were shaven. The plumage should also be so scanty that the shape of the bird, especially the tapering of the back and the roundness of the body may be seen, every feather should feel as if made of whalebone, and if raised with the finger should fall into its original place. It should be almost impossible to ruffle the plumage of a game cock. The tail should be rather small than otherwise, and carried somewhat drooping. The plumage of these birds is trimmed before they fight—this is called “cutting out”—and the less there is to remove in the way of feather, the better the bird. They are in every respect fighting birds, and we think every one sees a set-to between two of them with pleasure, if it occurs as they pass through a yard. The hens should be like the cocks, allowing for difference of sex, the necks and heads fine, legs taper, plumage hard, and combs small, upright, and serrated. Hens

should not be chosen with large or loose combs, and they should handle as hard as the cocks.

A word or two may not be out of place as to the table properties of this beautiful breed. It is true they are in no way fit for the fattening coop. They cannot bear the extra food without excitement, and that is not favourable to obesity. Nevertheless they have their merits. If they are reared like pheasants round a keeper's house, and allowed to run semi-wild in the woods, to frequent sunny banks and dry ditches, they will grow up like them; they will have little fat, but they will be full of meat. They must be eaten young, and a game pullet four or five months old, caught up wild in this way, and killed two days before she is eaten, is, perhaps, the most delicious chicken there is, in point of flavour. They must, however, be killed at this age. They attain early maturity, and good poultry must be young.

THE ORIGINAL POLAND FOWLS were Black, with White top-knots, and Gold and Silver spangled. There was formerly a breed of White with Black top-knot, but that is lost. There are now White, Black, Spangled, and Chamois. The three first are well known, and amenable to rule both in description and judging. The others may be called in process of formation.

The crest of the Poland cock should be composed of straight feathers, something like those of a hackle or saddle; they should grow from the centre of the crown, and fall over outside, forming a circular crest. That of the hen should be made up of feathers growing out, and turning in at the extremity, till they form a large top-knot, which should in shape resemble a cauliflower. It should be as nearly round as possible, and firm. The largest top-knots are often made up of loose feathers, that give it an uneven and accidental appearance. Now, however large these may be, they cannot compare or compete with symmetrical and firm, though small, ones. The carriage should be upright, and the breast more protuberant than in any other fowl, save the Sebright bantam. The body should be round and full, slightly tapering to the tail, which is ample and carried erect, spreading towards the extremity in the hen, and having well-defined sickle feathers in the cock. The legs should be lead-coloured, or black, and rather shorter than otherwise.

In the black species, there should be no white feathers save in the top-knot; in that it is desirable there should be no black ones, but I have never yet seen any without them. It is a very common practice to cut them off close to the skin, so that it may appear perfect, but at the first moult they re-appear.

In the golden and silver varieties, the spangling of the feathers should be black, and as correct and regular as possible; the ground colour should be rich golden tint in the one, and frosted silver in the other. In both cocks and hens the wings should be laced, each feather should have a black marking running the length of it, and when the wing is closed, it should show three or four stripes, terminated on each feather by a distinct black spangle. There exists difference of opinion as to the marking of the breast of the cock; some like it dark, others spangled. My own opinion inclines to the latter. The colour of the top-knot is another open question. Some admit white feathers; indeed prefer them; others would consider them a grievous fault. I hold with the latter; but it is only fair to say the white feathers are generally the result of age, and it is almost impossible to get a two years' old hen without white in the top-knot. I have seen spangled birds with pure white top-knots, and they were very handsome, but I still think they should be entirely of the same colour as the fowls; every feather should be laced like those of a Sebright bantam, although I admit it will be impossible to get them quite so distinct.

In the cocks of the Black breed with white top-knots gills are allowed but no combs. For Golden

and Silver Spangled neither comb nor gills, nor even the least spikes can be tolerated. The same improvement is required in Silver Spangled Polands as in Silver Spangled Hambro's, and tails should be clear white with a black spot at the end of each feather. The lacing of the wings of all the Spangled Polands is essential both for cocks and hens, and while the coloured top-knots should be composed of *laced* feathers, those on the body should be *spangled*. Anxious to give every information, and unwilling to impose an impossible task on any one, it is well I should state that in the black with white top-knots, it is impossible to get them without black feathers in front. These are immaterial, and should always be left. Trimming is seldom an advantage, and is mostly detected, always if competent judges see the birds on which it is exercised, as certain appearances cannot be naturally accomplished, however much they may be desired, and therefore breed suspicion. White feathers are not desirable in the top-knots of the Golden Poland hens, but they are always there, and they increase as they get older.

These birds are very subject to deformity, and crooked backs are common among them. The amateur who wishes to purchase will do well when he holds the bird in his left hand, to lay the palm

of his right flat on its back. In passing it gently down he will often detect one hip, *i. e.*, the insertion of the thigh-bone higher than the other; or he will find a curve in the back-bone from the hips to the tail. As these are transmitted to their offspring, such birds should always be rejected.

THE PENCILLED HAMBO' FOWL is a beautiful bird. There are two sorts: the golden and the silver. They differ in one respect only: the foundation colour of one is white, the other a brown yellow. One description will serve for both. They should have bright red double combs, which should be firmly fixed on the head, inclining to neither side, nor even being loose, ending in a point which should turn upwards; clear hackles, either white or yellow; taper blue legs, and ample tails; bodies and tails accurately pencilled with black everywhere except the neck. The more correct the marking, the more valuable the bird.

Their carriage is gay and proud; their shape is symmetry; and their appearance is altogether indicative of great cheerfulness, and carries an air of enjoyment which always prepossesses in their favour.

The plumage of the cocks differs somewhat from the hens; they are very little speckled, if at all, except while chickens, when the wings and hinder

parts are marked, but this seldom lasts after the first moult. In the silver variety the cock is almost white, having sometimes a chesnut patch on the wing, and towards the tail some black spots, but these disappear as he gets older. The tail should be black, and the sickle feathers tinged with a reddish white, while in the golden cock they should be shaded with a rich bronze or copper. The cock of the golden is red all over, and both must have well-defined white deaf-ears.

No fowls require more watching than these, if it be desired to breed them for exhibition. Degeneracy shows itself in the cocks either by a black tail, or one in which white or silver predominates, or by the absence of the white deaf-ear: either of these is fatal to success. In the hens it is apparent in spotted hackles, and in patchy plumage. The delicate and distinct pencilling is lost, and a cloudy, uneven mixture takes its place. This is fatal to them as exhibition birds. It is called mossy.

The great virtue and merit of these fowls are: they are prodigious layers, and this is not brought about by any undue feeding: it is their nature. They are said never to sit, and as a rule it is true of them; not one in a thousand deviates from it; but when I lived in Davies Street, I had one at liberty. She stole a nest in a lumber room, and brought out a brood of chickens.

They are excellent guards in the country; for when disturbed in their roosting place, they are the noisiest of the noisy, and nothing but death or liberty will induce them to hold their peace. I think I may say with truth, they lay twice as many eggs as any others.

In these, as in other breeds, erroneous ideas and names have crept in, some being correct descriptions of the same fowl under another name, but others being imaginative, so far as real Hambro' fowls are concerned.

The Bolton bays and greys, and Chitteprats, are identical with the Hambro'. There were also so-called Turkish and Creoles, which were the same.

As a general rule, it may be observed, no true bred Hambro' fowl has topknot, single comb, white legs, any approach to feather on the legs, white tail, spotted hackle, or fifth claw.

There is no bird that gains so much by change of climate as this does; the British bred are infinitely stronger than the imported.

There is another Hambro' now at least admitted into that family. They were originally called Pheasant fowls, as that bird was accused of being the parent on one side with about as much truth as the story, that the Barnacle that adheres to the bottom of a ship produces the goose that bears the same

name. They were also called Moss fowls, then Moonies. This last name would seem to have some foundation, because the end of every feather should have a moon figured in black, on the yellow or white ground, according as they are gold or silver. They are very beautiful, gay and proud in carriage; very full double and firmly fixed combs, with point at the end turning upwards; dark rim round the eye, blue legs, mixed hackle.

Like the Pencilled varieties, these are of two sorts, the golden and the silver. There are few breeds in which points are so scrupulously observed, and defects so insisted upon as in this. The Capulets and Montagues are Yorkshire and Lancashire. The former insist on black-breasted cocks, the latter must have spangled. We hold with the latter. There was formerly a contest about the tails of the cocks. Some contended they should be hen-tailed, *i.e.*, have no sickles, streamers, coverts, or turned feathers. This notion has, however, disappeared; and we may venture to give the principal points of these breeds, as admitted by most amateurs and exhibitors.

In golden cocks, the hackle should be clouded without any patches or rings of black, the saddle should be clouded or intermixed with black, the wing accurately barred and laced, the tail black, the breast well spangled. The comb full, thickly spiked, and

well piked, turning upwards behind. The deaf-ear small, round, and perfectly white; the foundation colour of the body a rich dark red. The same rules, save as to size of comb, apply to the hens, but their bodies must be spangled.

In silver the cocks have not the same clouding in the hackle or saddle, but they require the same comb, deaf-ear, laced and barred wing. They must also have a white tail, every feather of which must be tipped with black. The pullets are subject to the same laws of combs, ears, wings, and tails. They must also have clouded hackles, and their bodies must be accurately spangled. In each variety the legs must be blue.

CHAPTER XIV.

BANTAMS have long been favourites in England, their small size, their beauty, and their impudence gaining them admirers. Many years since, only those that were feathered to the toes were admired. The late Sir John Sebright, by much attention and a thorough knowledge of the subject, succeeded in producing birds of surpassing beauty and symmetry. Those

that bear his name are the most appreciated by fanciers ; they are of two colours, gold and silver ; they must have double combs, with pointed ends rising upwards, and well seated on the head, firmly fixed, not inclining to one side, nor yet raised on a fleshy pedestal : laced feathers, each being edged with black ; blue legs, without even the suspicion of a feather on them ; upright tail tipped with black at the point, which must be round and equal in width to the widest part of the feather. There should not be even a tendency to a curve in it. The side tail feathers rising from the back to the tail should also be flat, round topped, and accurately laced. There must be no hackle or saddle. In many respects they should closely resemble a hen cock. These are the principal points of the male. The hen requires the same comb, the same accurate lacing, the prominent breast, drooping wing ; her head should be very small, beak sharp. The carriage of these birds should resemble that of a good Fantail pigeon ; the head and tail should be carried up in the strut of the bird, till they nearly meet, and the wing should drop down the side instead of being carried up. In both sexes the wing feathers should be edged with black, and even the long feathers laced. Like all other first-class birds, these are difficult to get ; and lest amateurs should be discouraged, I may almost venture

to say, a faultless bird is hardly to be found. From the best-bred parents, single-combed chickens will constantly appear, but these will sometimes produce perfect double-combed progeny. Such are, however, only to be trusted when the possessor of them is sure that, although defective themselves, their parents were faultless in this particular. It is never advisable to breed from a faulty bird, if a perfect one can be had. Small size is a desideratum in these fowls; they are, therefore, seldom bred early, as growth is not desired. July is early enough to hatch them. Perfect cocks should not weigh more than seventeen ounces, nor hens more than fourteen.

None but those who understand the process can imagine the difficulties of producing the Sebright bantams. They were the result of years, and can only now be kept up by frequent changes of blood. If this be neglected, and the same stock is bred from year after year, the lacing first disappears, next the colours come in patches, and at last single combs, sickle feathers, and ugly yellow and black birds appear.

Other Bantams, to pretend to excellence, should be diminutive as the Sebright, and should have the same arrogant gait. But they differ inasmuch as the males should be large cocks in miniature, with hackle, saddle, and fully developed tail. The rule

of comb is not so imperative. In black and white birds it should be double, but it is not so necessary, nor does the substitution of a single one cause disqualification. In the black breed, white deaf-ears are necessary to excellence, and in both those of which we speak the sickle feathers should be long and well carried. No fowl has made more rapid or certain advances in public favour than the Game Bantam. At present we have duck-wings, black-breasted reds, and brown reds. The progress made justifies us in believing that ere long we shall have every variety of Game represented among these diminutive birds. They are subject to the same laws of matching as the game fowls. The cock must not have the strut of the bantam, but the bold, fearless, unquailing demeanour of the game; his wings must not droop, but must be carried close up to his body, and his feathers must be hard and close. As they are also subject to the same laws of colour and matching, they should be carefully mated with hens of the same breed, both as to feather and colour of legs. The hens should be longer than ordinary bantams, and, like the cock, should be clean, hard, and rather scanty of feather. They should also have the game head and expression of face, and small, straight, upright, and numerous serrated combs. Feathered-legged Bantams may be of any colour; the

old-fashioned birds were very small, falcon-hocked, and feathered with long quill feathers to the extremity of the toe. Many of them were bearded. They are now very scarce; indeed, till exhibitions brought them again into notice, these beautiful specimens of their tribe were all neglected and fast passing away. Nothing but the Sebright was cultivated, but now we bid fair to revive the pets of our ancestors in all their beauty.

We have Bantams brought from Japan, and most people are pleased with them. Some are quite white, some black and white. They have rather large heads, very ample single combs, redundant plumage. Their legs are entirely concealed by it. They strut as they walk, throwing the tail up and the head back till they nearly meet. They are said to be the constant companions of man in the country they come from. They have an expression of fun, drollery, and good nature, that would qualify them for the characters of Punch or Falstaff at an amateur poultry performance. During two or three years we had some most excellent Cochin Bantams shown. They were buff. Had the breed been continued we should doubtless have had white and grouse. We wish we had. They were quaint old-fashioned looking birds, the exact counterpart of their larger brethren. They have disappeared for some

time, and we fear we shall have long to wait for them.

The French Fowls are now thoroughly understood in England, being largely kept, especially two of the three breeds. They have emerged from the "various" class, and, with the exception of the La Flèche, they form large ones at the principal exhibitions. The experience of some years goes to show that the Crevecœurs lay eggs as large as the La Flèche, while the Houdans lay as many, but not so large. In constitution the Houdan is stronger than the Crevecœur. Nothing can be said for the La Flèche. You may have twenty in the morning, all strong healthy birds as far as appearance goes, but it is not uncommon for them all to be down at night, and many of them dead within a few days. Out of twenty imported at one time, sixteen have died in a week. These were all cocks. The cocks are more subject to disease than the hens. We owe most of our knowledge of these breeds to an excellent work published in Paris, by M. Jacque. it is called "Le Poulailier." We are happy to acknowledge our obligation to the author and his book. We have now kept the three breeds for some years. We keep the Crevecœurs and Houdans largely; we have little to do with La Flèche. We have found the best preventive to disease is to withhold water,

or to give it very scantily. We last winter tried an experiment: we kept some Crevecœurs without water during six weeks, and they did perfectly well. Our invariable rule with these French birds is to give water (if at all) in small quantities morning and evening. Attention to this will save much loss and trouble. When these breeds get out of condition they go at once to the water, stand there and drink incessantly, becoming worse hourly.

THE HOUDAN has short thick legs, and a round, well-proportioned body, large head, small top-knot falling backward like a lark's crest. It is bearded, and has five claws on each foot. It is a good sized fowl, weighing, when fully grown, cock seven pounds, hen from five pounds to six pounds. The plumage should be speckled, white, black, and straw colour. Specimens are more highly esteemed if they have no yellow feathers, and red ones are positively incorrect. The comb is the most remarkable part of this bird, and we cannot do better than quote our before-named authority:—"Comb: Triple, transversal in the direction of the beak, composed of two flattened spikes, of long and rectangular form, opening from right to left like two leaves of a book; thick, fleshy, and variegated at the edges. A third spike grows between these two, having somewhat the shape of

an irregular strawberry, and the size of a long nut. Another, quite detached from the others, and about the size of a pea, should show between the nostrils and above the beak." This gives the bird a grotesque appearance, and there is an air of impudent drollery and humour about him that is peculiar to the breed. The legs are dark leaden grey, speckled with white. In this breed the hens approach more nearly the weight of the cock than is usual. The hen is bearded and top-knotted, the latter appendage almost concealing the eyes. These fowls are very popular in France, as layers and table fowls. We have little experience of them in the last capacity; their dark legs are disliked in England; but, with ten years experience of them, we can speak positively in their favour. They are very hardy, capital layers, never sick, admirably adapted for keeping in a confined space; they do not sit.

THE CREVECŒUR is, perhaps, better known than any French Fowl, having been extensively bred in England during the last two years. Our experience is that it is one of the best layers we have ever met with, not only on account of number, but also of size, being equal in this respect to the Spanish. It is a short legged breed, square bodied, deep chest, well shaped for the table.

Like most of these breeds, it is bearded and top-knotted, but the latter appendage is not that of the Poland. It is more like a crest, and allows room in front for the comb. This is singularly shaped, and we shall again quote M. Jacque:—"Comb: Various, but always forming two horns, sometimes parallel, straight and fleshy; sometimes joined at the base, slightly notched, pointed, and separating at their extremities; sometimes adding to this latter description interior ramifications like the horns of a young stag." The same author says: "The comb, shaped like horns, gives the Creveccœur the appearance of a devil." The legs should be black, or very dark slate blue. The plumage should be entirely black, with bright blue, and green metallic lustre, except the feathers of the belly, which are dark-brown. The top-knot, as in Polands, will become partly white, after moulting two or three times.

Many have their hackles, saddles, and wing coverts straw colour. These are not less pure, and they will breed black chickens, but they are less esteemed by very particular amateurs. We have found, as in some other breeds, it is easier to breed a dozen pullets true to colour than one cock, and in all black breeds the cocks will throw foul feathers at times. The hens should weigh from five pounds to six pounds each; the cocks seven pounds to seven and

a half pounds. Just as the Houdan has a roguish air and deportment, so the Crevecœur is staid, solemn, and grave. They may be said to represent two of their countrymen—Robert Macaire and M. Guizot. They are less hardy than the Houdan.

LA FLECHE.—This is a singular bird, and no description will serve better than that of M. Jacque: “A strong firm body, well seated on its legs, and long muscular feet, appearing less than it really is, because the feathers are close; every muscular part well developed; black plumage.

“The La Flèche is the tallest of all French cooks; it has many points of resemblance with the Spanish, from which I believe it to be descended, by crossing with the Crevecœur. Others believe that it is connected with the Brêda, which it does, in fact, resemble in some particulars. It has white, loose, and transparent skin; short, juicy, and delicate flesh, which puts on fat easily.” We have had many of the best specimens of this bird during the last few years. They are very good layers of large eggs. In this particular they are superior, like the Crevecœur, to any breed we know, except the Spanish, and if there be anything in breed, making one species better than another for laying in the winter, we should give the preference to these. We cannot say

as much for their table properties. We do not think them as good for the table as the Dorking, and their black legs will always be an objection to them in England.

The La Flèche has the body of the Spanish, placed on legs that are forward, being immediately under the breast rather than the body of the bird. It has a very bold, cheerful, lively face, but the general expression is curious, from the extraordinary comb, which we will describe from M. Jacque. "Transversal, double, forming two horns bending forward, united at their base, divided at their summits, sometimes even and pointed, sometimes having ramifications on the inner side. A little double *combling* protrudes from the upper part of the nostrils, and although hardly as large as a pea, this combing, which surmounts the sort of rising formed by the protrusion of the nostrils, contributes to the singular aspect of the head. This measured prominence of the comb seems to add to the characteristic depression of the beak, and gives the bird a likeness to a rhinoceros."

It should have a large deaf-ear, perfectly white; not so large as the Spanish, but larger than that of any other fowl. It has slate-blue legs, darker or lighter according to age, turning to a spotted grey as they get old.

It should be entirely black, but it is no disadvantage if it has a few white spots on the crown. The abdominal feathers are sometimes brown, and, like the Spanish, the flight of the wing is sometimes white till after the first moult.

The hen differs from the cock only by having a smaller comb. She must have a white earlobe.

These are a peculiar but a stylish breed. They are very good layers. Their dark legs are unsightly on the table, and they are the most delicate of all the French breeds; they seem, especially the cocks, to lack constitution; they are no sooner out of condition than they are in a hopeless state. None of these breeds sit.

CHAPTER XV.

THERE is still a various class at all the exhibitions. It is necessary because from the fact that the first introducers of Cochins realized large sums of money by their sales, many still hope to do the same if they can get anything new. Others, failing in their search after novelty, are content to reproduce specimens of breeds that have already appeared unsuccessfully many years since.

A book on "Fowls" would not be complete without some notice of these varieties. We will, therefore, describe the most noted among them.

CREEPIES, BAKIES, OR DUMPIES.—Fowls with legs so short that they seem to have none. They should be single combed, and have ample tails and large bodies. They are originally Scotch, and are still kept there in many parts. They are said to be excellent layers and very good mothers. They were formerly more plentiful than they are now.

CHAPTER XVI.

PTARMIGAN FOWLS.—The origin of these birds is enveloped in mystery. It is the opinion of many amateurs that they may be made by crossing the old feather-legged white Bantam cock with the white Poland hen. The shape and appearance of the bird would favour the idea, but in the face of the assurance of the breeders that they are pure, and breed true, we are bound to admit it. They are birds of pleasing appearance, gay carriage, rather upright than otherwise. Colour pure white; legs heavily feathered with stout quill feathers to the toe. Vulture-hocked;

the feathers reaching nearly to the ground. Tail ample in both sexes and carried well up; the body rather small and very round and plump in the hand; legs white. The top-knot of the cock should differ from all others, inasmuch as it should rise from the head in long feathers, and projecting forwards beyond the beak, curl upwards at the extremity something like the principal feathers of the crest of the cockatoo. That of the hen, on the contrary, although ample, falls back like a lark crest.

THE FRIESLAND OR FRIZZLED FOWL.—This bird for many years was better known in England as the French Fowl; it has little merit beyond its extraordinary plumage. Every feather should be stiffly curled, and the flight feathers of the wings should be little more than quills. As no pains have been taken to breed them, those exhibited generally vary in colour both of feathers and legs.

THE JAPANESE BANTAM OR SILKY FOWL.—There is no question of the purity of these extraordinary birds, as they have been known many years in this country. They are covered with white hair instead of feathers, but the wings have long quills in them. Their faces, flesh, combs, legs and bones are blue. The deaf-ear varies, inasmuch as it shows white

under the metallic tinge. Many have five toes, double combs, and small top-knots; others lack these distinctions. Their chief points are, purely white plumage, blue skin and bones throughout. They are hardy, cheerful, and pleasing birds for those to keep who admire curiosities. They are average layers, and excellent sitters and mothers. They are said to be good for the table, but their appearance is so repulsive, few have had the courage to taste them. They make capital sitters and mothers for any small breed of fowls or game.

THE RUMPKIN OR RUMPLESS FOWL is another competitor in the various classes of an exhibition. If it had a tail, and were consequently not what it is, it would be a pretty bird. It is a pure breed, and admits of description. It has a remarkably sharp, intelligent face, round body, very full breast, and taper legs. It is, doubtless, the absence of tail that gives the appearance, but it has more of rotundity in shape than any fowl I know. There is no settled colour for them, but they are generally brown or black.

THE EMU OR SILKY COCHIN is of recent introduction. They are an accidental variety. In giving such an unqualified opinion, I should give my reasons for it; they are as follow :

I had a walk of Buff Cochins, from which I bred two years in succession; the next year, out of about sixty chickens, nineteen were silky; and they were not partially so, but they were without a feather on them—they still retained their uniform buff colour. I have observed and pointed out to many amateurs at shows where I have been judging, a tendency to this variety in the specimens exhibited. The first indication is at the extremity of the wing feathers and the covering of the thighs, it looks like an extension of the fluff over the feathers. The birds disappeared as suddenly as they came. I bred from the same birds for two years, and breed still at the same place, but have never seen one since the foregoing was published.

THE ANDALUSIAN FOWL.—This bird has most points in common with the Spanish, of which it is, in the opinion of many judges, an off-shot. The chief difference is in colour; being, instead of black, of a slate blue, shaded with darker tints. They are long on the leg; the hen has a drooping comb; that of the cock should be upright. They are handsome and stately birds, said to be very hardy, and excellent layers. Although they have been exhibited for years, they have not yet been deemed of sufficient importance to deserve a place in a distinct class.

It is however but fair to state that good specimens are seldom shown without being distinguished by the judges. They should have the white deaf-ear, but are not required to have the white face.

THE ANCONA FOWL. — This remarkable bird, although it has been before the public for some years, has made little progress in becoming a favourite. It is not surprising, as it is more curious than handsome. Its chief peculiarity is a comb of most unusual size, which hangs over, entirely concealing one side of the face; its wattles are also very long and large. It is rather undersized than otherwise, and short-legged. The common colour is black, intermixed with white feathers. They are said to be prolific layers, and to produce unusually large eggs.

There are other breeds, but they like many of those we have just named are doomed to pass away. Strange specimens are met with in the various class, but they have only perhaps their unique appearance to recommend them. They have no property that is not possessed by other breeds thoroughly well known and extensively kept.

Hence they become purely fancy birds, are heard of for a time, and then disappear for ever.

TURKEYS.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE best known varieties of the turkey are the Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, American, and French. In addition to these we have the White, Buff, and Speckled, birds which are hardly to be called distinct varieties, although with judicious breeding the flocks are often kept up for years true to colour.

The breed which attains greater size than any other is the Cambridge, and it has of late years very much improved. The prevailing colour in the male is a dark greenish bronze, with grey bars on the long flight feathers, and on the extremities of the tail and rump feathers. The head and wattles are of a bright red, and the neck and breast feathers resemble the scales of a carp. The legs stout, long, and of a deep flesh colour, which becomes lighter with age except on the inner sides, where it deepens.

An early hatched, well fed young cock of this breed will attain by Christmas the weight of 23 lbs., and two year old stags will sometimes reach 80 lbs. The hens are coloured very much like the cocks, except that some of them incline to a soft ashy

grey, and have then a mealy appearance. The young hens attain a weight of 14 lbs., and the old ones sometimes as much as 18 lbs. These are exceptional, although not very uncommon, weights. They are far beyond the average of any yard. Turkey breeders, who can attain to 18 lbs. for cocks, and 11 lbs. for hens, may call themselves successful, the birds being from nine to ten months old.

The Norfolk turkey is a more compact and smaller boned bird than the preceding, of a deep black plumage, with a brownish tinge on the end of the saddle and tail feathers. This breed has been very much improved the last two or three years, and is much esteemed as affording a great deal of meat of excellent quality and of delicate whiteness. The cocks attain almost as great a weight as the Cambridge-shire birds, but the hens are smaller and more symmetrical.

The American, originally a wild bird brought over as a novelty, has become naturalized, and now ranks as one of our recognized breeds. It is a very handsome bird of good size, slender in appearance, with flat shining head, having rather the appearance of that of a bird of prey, the wattles are much smaller than those of the other breeds, and are of a blueish tinge, which deepens when the cock bird is proud and drumming. The plumage is an uniform metallic

bronze, very bright in the cock birds, but more subdued in the hens. The flight feathers are evenly and regularly barred with white; the tail feathers are barred alternately with white, dark rich brown, and black; the legs in both sexes of a bright pink. These birds are very hardy, but are wanderers by nature, and are better suited for keeping in parks and large grounds than in small enclosures. They are more spiteful than the English birds, and are, it is thought, more prolific.

Turkeys in France are reared to a great extent, and enormous sums of money are turned by sale of them annually. There appear to be two varieties, one resembling our Norfolk breed, but larger and hardier; the other a smaller and peculiar bird, with flatter head and short squat frame, the head in both sexes covered with white wrinkly flesh, which hardly ever takes colour even in the breeding season. This latter breed is found principally in the "Midi" and the south of France. It fattens more easily and becomes fatter than any other kind of turkey. Many of these are annually imported, and are found to make excellent crosses.

It is hardly necessary to give any description of the white or buff coloured birds, as they have nothing peculiar except their colour to distinguish them from others. There is one very curiously

coloured variety, much bred in Ireland, which has the appearance of being a black and white barred bird.

- The turkey, of whatever breed it may be, is a capricious and troublesome bird, very difficult to keep at home, and a serious disturber of the peace of the poultry yard. There is great trouble in getting them to take to a roosting-house; they will generally seek quarters for themselves, and although driven away from them night after night, yet there they will be found. If the place they choose be tolerably sheltered, and free from thieves and foxes, it is as well to leave them to their choice. As the laying time approaches the hens must be constantly watched that their nests may be known. Where they have scope to wander they will sometimes get away a quarter of a mile from the homestead. The eggs should be removed daily from the nest, and where several hens are kept it is always advisable to mark them, to know in what sequence to set them. If a hen turkey has taken to the nest provided for her, or has chosen one for herself in a tolerably secure place, she may, when she appears really broody and staunch, be furnished with from thirteen to twenty-one eggs, according to her size. Where turkeys are kept in any numbers it is always advisable to have a feeding house or shed for them,

where the sitting hens can be taken off to feed out of sight of their nests. This is necessary, or they would frequently starve to death. A heap of wood ashes on the floor of this house is always desirable. Two hen turkeys should always be set the same day, and then after a few days the clear eggs should be withdrawn, and the fertile ones placed under one hen; the other hen may then have fresh eggs put to her.

Turkeys generally hatch on the 80th or 81st day, the young, if any come out in advance, should be placed in flannel in a basket near the fire. If it be a good average hatch the addled eggs should be withdrawn, and the mother allowed to hover her young ones undisturbed for some few hours. She should then be shifted to her coop, and for some weeks a good deal of care is necessary. The best turkey coop is like an ordinary hen coop, but of course higher in front to enable the bird to stand up. It is generally made with a roof more slanting than the hen coop in order to confine and check her movements, as she is very timid. The coop, according to the accompanying sketch, should be in front three feet high, and at the back one foot high, two feet in breadth. The board marked *a* should be made to slide easily that the poults may be withdrawn or handled without lifting the front to disturb

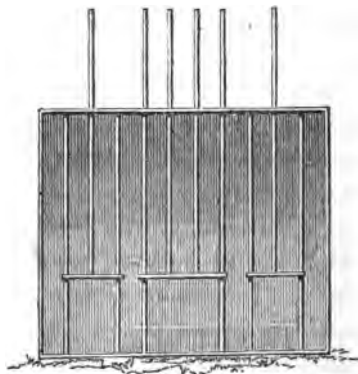
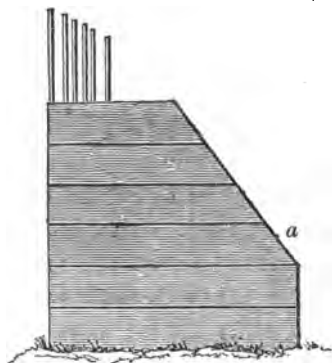
the hen. The unusual slope in the roof is to prevent her from wandering about in her coop, as if excited she would trample her brood to death.

Front
3 ft. high.

Back
1 ft. high.

Breadth
2 ft.

Depth
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft.



When first hatched they require boiled egg, bread crumbs, curd, and a little flower of barley meal rubbed over it. This will be the staple food for some days ; by degrees the dainty part of it may be discontinued and the poults brought to the commonplace diet of barley-meal, oat-meal, and corn. Chopped onion and onion tops, leeks, endive, and almost any green vegetables will be found valuable as turkey food. When the poults are growing fast in the autumn, it is an excellent plan to give them some large white turnips, with greens and heads, and let them peck them off. They will eat them off clean, and the effect on the bird is beneficial. It is, however, necessary to watch them, as they sometimes cause scouring. When that is the case they must be discontinued.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DAMP is very injurious to young turkeys, and it is almost essential they should have a covered place to serve as a refuge in wet or very damp weather. If it is wished to be purely temporary, such a place may be made with a few thatched hurdles, all that is

required of them is to keep off cold winds and to keep out rain. Dry sand or road grit are the best things for the flooring.

While the poults are young, water should be given but very sparingly; and never allowed to stand by them. When the birds have drank, the vessels should be taken away or overturned. The hen turkey should be kept in coop until her young are well feathered. The side bars of the coop, as in the drawing, may be raised sufficiently to allow of the ingress and egress of the poults, but if the hen be allowed her liberty she will wander away with them and lose them in long grass, hedges, or any ditch, and stray on perfectly satisfied so long as she has a poult or two following her. Even when the poults are sufficiently grown to be allowed to follow the hen at liberty, she should never be let out so long as the heavy dew, or white frost, remain on the grass. She must be confined till the sun is up, and has dried the fields and hedge-rows where she is sure to go. As it answers to keep them well, they still require to be fed well and early. The rip that accommodated them when poults will no longer contain them. Another should be made entirely of open bars, wide enough to allow the young to pass in and out, and narrow enough to prevent fowls from going in to eat the food necessary for the young

turkeys, but far too expensive for the ordinary poultry. This coop being put in a dry place, near hayricks is very suitable, the hen should be put under it with her poults; they can then have their food without fear of its being taken by those for whom it was not intended.

Such a coop need not be expensively made. A large empty skeleton china crate may give a good idea of one. We have often seen them used, and used them. If it is necessary to make one it may be five feet long, three feet high, and four feet wide; bars four inches apart. When the broods get old enough to shift for themselves they are generally driven to the stubbles in charge of a boy with a long bean stick, his principal occupation being to check the fighting among the young cocks, and to see that they do not stray out of bounds. At night they are driven home to their house, where their supper is laid ready in troughs. While young and growing it is generally a mixture of one-third meal with two-thirds pollard or middlings, made into a thin paste. As the birds grow bigger, and the time approaches when they will be sent to market, the quality and quantity of their food is increased, and their time on the stubble very much shortened. When fattened and ready for market, they should be fasted twelve hours, killed, picked clean, and their feet washed;

the birds are then hung up by the feet to set and stiffen, or if they are to be prepared for market they are placed on a shelf in a cool dairy or pantry, on their breasts, with their thighs and feet up in the air against the wall, and their heads and necks hanging down; a weighted board is placed along the backs to keep them in position, and by this means the meat of the breast is made to show out to the best advantage. When turkeys are killed for home consumption the plan of picking them clean, and then hanging them up by the feet, will be found the simpler plan.

GEESE.

CHAPTER XIX.

GEESE are birds that require but little care, and can do much towards getting their own living. Wherever there is a common or bit of rough pasture on which they can be turned out, there the flock may be kept advantageously. Till very lately, the breed of Geese generally had received but little attention; few crosses were attempted, and their

results were seldom improvements. The introduction of the Toulouse breed for stock, and the competition with the French fed geese in the London market, now cause the English feeders to pay more attention to the selection of their breeding birds.

The first and most generally known variety is the old English saddle-backed goose—a bird of medium size, squat in shape, and only an indifferent breeder. The average weight of these birds when killed and picked for market is 10 lbs. to 12 lbs.

The Toulouse—a very large and prolific goose, of uniform grey plumage, long neck, with species of dewlap under the throat, often giving a sort of “gôitre” appearance to the bird; short legs, large flat feet, abdominal pouch very much developed, so much so as to touch the ground; very upright, almost penguin-like carriage, and a short broad tail. This bird attains great weight, well fed young ones coming up to 16 lbs. and 18 lbs. each. It lays a large number of eggs without wanting to sit, sometimes as many as thirty, and instances have been known of an old goose laying fifty, with only a day or two’s intermission.

The white geese, sometimes called Emden, are scarce. Unless the strain be carefully kept up, there is considerable difficulty in getting the females quite white; indeed, one of the largest feeders for

the London market, on being applied to for some, wrote word he had never seen any.

The common goose lays from nine to seventeen eggs, generally about thirteen. The simplest and most economical goose pen is a square enclosure, with nests built of sods, and roofed with large flat turfs of grass; such a nest should be twenty-eight or thirty inches square. The geese are very fond of sitting in these, and generally bring off good lags from them. Each nest should be just large enough for the goose to turn in, and high enough for her to sit comfortably. An ordinary pig-stye makes an excellent goose pen. The goose sits thirty days. The young are hardy little birds, and feed easily on almost any kind of food. When first hatched, a little curd, bread crumbs, and meal, with green food chopped in it, is best for them. The goose should not be at liberty, as she wanders too much, and the goslings do not require much water; a large milk pan, filled half way up with large pebbles and then with clean water, will be all that is wanted for the first few days. As they get stronger and able to feed on ordinary food, the goose may be let out with them on pasture or anywhere where there is a goose-bite of grass. They should not be at liberty the whole day, or they are liable to suffer from cramp; but when they appear satisfied with their ramble, it

is well to drive them into the pen and litter them on dry straw. Their food being put in a trough in the pen prevents waste, and gives them an incentive to come home.

Besides the varieties already mentioned, there are several others wholly or partly domesticated; but they are nearly all of them more fitted for the lake and park than the farm-yard. They are the Chinese, Canadian, Bean, Egyptian, Bernicle, Brent, Cereopsis, &c., &c. One variety very pleasing in appearance has been known to us only since the Crimean war. It is called the "Sebastopol," is like a small common goose, except that it has a sort of shoulder-knot and streamers in the shape of long curly feathers hanging from the shoulders and back.

Much difficulty is often experienced in selecting the sexes, and although practised men are seldom mistaken, yet even they can lay down no rule that is easy to follow. Close examination may always be depended upon, but that is not easy to the uninitiated. There is a curious plan adopted in Cambridgeshire. All the geese are shut in a stable or a pig-stye; a small dog is then put in. It is said, and we believe with truth, the geese will all lift up their heads and go to the back of the place, while the ganders will lower and stretch out their necks, hissing all the time.

If it be absolutely necessary to define the sex, it can be done by handling the birds.

To fatten them, they should be put in a small place, and supplied with food in a trough. This should be oats, bran, and some fine gravel, mixed up in water. The gravel may be omitted every other day. If at any time the geese are off their feed, a sod of growing grass with plenty of earth should be cut, and put in water with some grains of corn scattered upon it. They will eat it greedily.

It is perfectly true geese do not require to be in the neighbourhood of a pond always, nor do they frequent it much except to roost upon it; but it is *necessary* that shortly before the laying time, they should have access to water, two feet or more in depth. Where the sitting geese have not access to water, it is also necessary the eggs should be thoroughly wetted every day, more especially as hatching time draws nigh.

DUCKS.

CHAPTER XX.

WE will give the descriptions of the ducks principally kept for table purposes, and afterwards deal with the rules that are common to them all.

Aylesbury ducks should have long flat broad bills of a delicate pale flesh color; the eye grey or black; head and neck long; chest and body broad and flat; legs pale orange and wide apart.

Rouen ducks should be the counterparts in color of wild ducks. For pure birds no deviation however slight, may be allowed. Those ducks with rings round their necks, drakes with white flight feathers, ducks with leaden colored bills, drakes with grey breasts, good as they may be for the table, lose all right to the name of pure Rouens.

The Buenos Ayrean, Labrador, or East Indian duck, is a bird of beauty. Its origin is uncertain. We believe it came from the first-named country. Its great merit is to be small; we saw some of the first that came over, and they were not larger than widgeon. The drake should have a foundation color of rich black, shaded all over with green metallic

lustre. The brilliancy of the lustre aided by the rays of the sun is superb. The bill black, but sometimes with a slight orange tint. Legs and feet dusky orange. The duck should be like the drake, but she seldom shows as much brilliancy of color, and her bill must be black.

These are the principal breeds of ducks for table use. Every duck is a good one if it is well fed. Of those we have mentioned the Aylesbury and Rouen give the largest size, and the Buenos Ayrean comes next to the wild duck for symmetry. There was formerly a large duck known as the Suffolk duck, because it was extensively kept in that county. There was another known as the Essex duck for the same reason. Both strongly resembled the duck recently introduced called the Cayuga. While speaking of ducks for the table, it would be unfair not to mention the beautiful call ducks. We shall have to speak of them later as fancy birds when we treat of wild fowl; but many who have tried them declare they rank among the best eating ducks. They are very small, but present on the table a broad full breast, in which you may bury an ordinary carving knife.

The Aylesbury is the earliest layer among all the ducks, frequently laying in December. The Rouen is much later, but it is a far hardier bird, and suc-

ceeds in many places where the Aylesbury would fail.

Ducks do not require a large pond or much water. They require only a tank or vessel, holding about two feet of water, enough for them to swim in. The early Aylesbury ducks that make such large prices in London, (it is calculated £80,000 are paid annually for Aylesbury ducks), never see the water; and wherever it is wanted to have young fat heavy ducks, they will grow faster and become larger when kept in pens, farm-yards, or in pastures, than where they are at and in the water all day. They are troublesome birds when beginning to lay: they drop their eggs all over the place, and require watching constantly, or they lay in the yards, in the road, anywhere but in the nest prepared for them.

Ducks' eggs are generally placed under hens, the ducks themselves being good and close sitters, but bad mothers. They sit four weeks, sometimes thirty days. The young, when hatched, want constant feeding; they thrive on curd, onion tops, bread crumbs, &c.; a little black pepper chopped up in their food helps them much. An upland pasture, dry lawn, or yard are good places for the coop for the first few days; after that if it can be moved into a kitchen garden they will thrive and do well for themselves. In these, as in everything else,

young birds must not be allowed to be short of food, and wherever their place does not supply sufficient food it must be given to them. They will feed well out of any shallow vessel, partly filled with water and meal. There is no better place for a duck or hen with ducklings than an old pig-stye. It affords all the shelter necessary, and the spaces between the stones and pitching being almost always full of water, &c., supply the young with the means of foraging. It is well at times to let the young ones visit their natural element for a short time. The evil of allowing the duck to take them while young to the pond, is, she takes them on large waters, drags them under beetling banks in search of food, and if the fly or gnat are on the water, she stays there till after dark, leaving part of her progeny behind her. They are, however, soon able to shift for themselves, and if they are moderately looked after and tended by their keeper, they may soon be taken from the broken-hearted hen, who has been often tempted to try a swim after her tiresome and disobedient brood.

When they are to be fattened, they should like all other poultry, be confined. Their food should be in troughs. It may be barley meal or ground oats, mixed with bran, a little fine gravel with it, and the whole thoroughly wetted with water, but not made

liquid. Tallow-chandlers' greaves greatly assist the process of fattening. Ducks are very fond of meat of all kinds, and they thrive wonderfully upon it.

Unlike fowls, ducks may be allowed to have their food always before them.

ORNAMENTAL DUCKS.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE knowledge of a subject or pursuit removes many difficulties, and places things within our reach at little cost, that years ago were supposed to be accessible only to a very few, and then at great cost.

Among such pursuits we may class that of keeping ornamental water fowl. Nothing can exceed the beauty of these birds, both in shape and in the variety of their plumage. The various whistling ducks: the Mandarin, as remarkable for the shape of some of its feathers, as for their rich color; the curiously marked Bahama teal; the beautiful Chilian pintail; the Carolina, with its variegated and lustrous

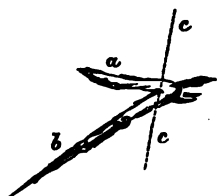
plumage; the Sheldrake with its deep red bill and black head and neck, its yellow, black and white plumage; the singularly graceful Pintail with its long taper neck white-marked at the back, till it reaches the head, its long tail that has earned for it abroad the name of "Faisan de Mer;" the cheerful Widgeon, whistling, calling, and making all sorts of confidential cacklings about dusk.

The shy variegated Teal, always looking out for the means of escape from captivity; the Dun Bird, with its red, grey and dark costume, dozing on the water; the Tufted Duck, with its well-marked black and white plumage, the former rich in metallic lustre, its graceful tuft hanging from the back of the head; the Gadwall, with its rich maroon wing, and its breast of chain armour; the Shoveller, with its strangely formed bill and bright combination of almost every color; the Garganey, having its white striped face, the curiously shaded breast, sharply divided from the lighter color of the belly, the beautiful slate wings, and the unique blue and white streamers hanging down on each side. These are not all, but they form a goodly catalogue. Some of the smaller geese are very beautiful. The dark plumaged but beautifully shaped Brent, with its white necklace; the well-marked and shaded Bernicle. Although not ducks or geese, other birds that are

welcome in collections are coots, moor-hens, and dab-chicks.

Wild fowl may be kept wherever there is water. A large sheet is not necessary. All that is really requisite is to suit your birds in habits and numbers to the space you have at command, and the money you intend to spend. Although many of these birds are tame bred, yet it is always a safe precaution to have them pinioned. This operation should be thoroughly performed. It is often thought that if the five first feathers of the wing are removed, the bird is incapacitated from flying; but it is not so, a bird will to all appearance, and for a short distance, fly as well without these feathers as with them. The operation should be the removal of all that can be found beyond the spur. The first joint of the wing is the principal one, and cannot fail to be detected by anyone seeking it. The next joint is a principal one, but smaller than the first. All the feathers grown beyond this point are essential to flight, and should therefore be removed. In front of this joint there is a spur, and then there are two more joints. All beyond the spur should be removed, but it should not be damaged in any way. It is the only weapon except the bill with which water fowl are provided. It requires two people to pinion a bird properly. One should hold the bird by the wing,

and placing it (the wing) on the corner of a table or bench, or better still on the top of a post, he should hold it there with a sharp stout knife placed in position to cut off all that is necessary. In the sketch, *a* is the spur, *b* the wing, and *c* the knife.



a The spur.

b The part to be removed.

c The position of the knife.

It will be seen this latter is passed under the spur, the edge being brought down to the bone. It should then be struck sharply with a mallet or other wooden instrument, and the piece flies off. If the bird is turned on the water directly, it stays the bleeding, and it seems to be little felt. The spur always afterwards becomes a protection to the cicatrized wound. The total inability to fly is useful, because nothing makes a bird satisfied in its new home so readily as the discovery it has lost the power of leaving it. It also renders a very high fence unnecessary. Although pinioned, it is almost impossible to keep wild fowl at home on running water. They will follow it. The best place is a pond, and this should be fenced in with wire-netting, either near

the water, or some distance from it. If the piece of water be a large one, it will probably have islands on it, they are very desirable, so much so, that it is sometimes worth while to make them. For this purpose it is not necessary to go to great expense, or to make one that shall endure for many years. It is only necessary to make a large raft, solidly bound together, to cover it with earth as deep as it will carry, and to plant thereon shrubs that will grow in peat and water. As soon as the spot is fixed upon where the island is to become a fixture, it is an excellent plan to throw in gnarled and rough roots of trees, in number according to the depth of the water, and then by means of weights or stones, and iron chains to moor the island immediately over them. The island cannot be too rugged, but there should be on each side a pathway reaching to the water, to enable the birds to ascend easily. This island should be planted with fast growing shrubs that love the water. The ducks make their nests under and among them. They also afford them shelter both by night and day. This remark holds good as regards all places where ducks are kept. They must have the means of getting out of the water easily. A weak or a beaten bird will drown if it cannot get out of the water, as surely as a hen. There should be landing places in all their haunts.

With wild fowl as with poultry, new comers are not always received with open arms, and if set upon by the old inhabitants before they know the locality, they are sure to be killed, unless they can find an easy place to land. It is a wise and good precaution to have a small piece of water fenced off, in which to put ducks on their first arrival. It should be merely a few feet square, contain one or two shrubs or very high grass to afford shelter. Wire-netting or wattle hurdles will do to form this enclosure, which should be half land half water. The latter, nowhere more than eight inches or a foot deep, and shallowing gradually to the dry ground. This is rendered necessary, because birds are often bought that have been sometime in confinement. Their feathers have become dry, and admit the water to the inner downy covering. When first set at liberty they swim as far as they can from land. They may be watched sinking deeper and deeper in the water till they drown, and only the top of their backs is seen out of water. Nothing of the sort can happen if they are put for twenty-four hours in the preparatory cage. All birds, especially those that have been wild, have a great objection to be handled, and as they resist violently, they are sometimes injured by the squeezing they undergo at the hands of a person unused to hold them. When they are turned out for the first time,

the lid of the basket should be partially opened, and the birds allowed to go out one by one. By these means they may be accurately counted and their condition noted. The occasional pen I have suggested, should for these reasons have two doors, one for the admission of the birds. This should be opened, and the mouth of the basket or any part of it, with the lid raised, placed against it; the birds go to the water directly. The other should open *in the water*, enabling the keeper at any time to allow the birds to take to their new home without being frightened.

Most of these birds breed in confinement, but they have different notions of nesting. The Carolina duck and the Egyptian goose both perch. The former will not make a nest on the ground, but failing to find a convenient spot, she will lay her eggs about. A favourite place is the top of an old pollard stem, just rising above the water. They also like boxes or hutches. These are very simple and



easily made. They resemble a dog hutch. They must

have a bead in front, to prevent eggs from being dragged or from rolling out, and they must slant from front to back for the same reason. There should be some holes bored in the bottom to allow any wet to run out, and about nesting time some stiff straw or dry reeds should be put in the box. Sheldrakes will only lay in a hole or a burrow. Hence the name they have acquired of burrow ducks. We know a well-authenticated instance of their burrowing into a hay-rick, laying, and bringing out their young. Others make their nests, lay, and sit. They do not always sit closely, and following the old proverb, it is wise not to put all your eggs into one basket. When you can find the nest, put part of the eggs under a hen, leave some for the duck to sit upon.

We have to do now only with food. This should always be given on a shallow, because if thrown into deeper water, much is lost. Barley, buck-wheat, hemp-seed occasionally, are all good food. Nothing makes them so tame, and there are few things they like so much as bread. It swims on the surface, and it is amusing to see the number of birds dashing after it. In clear waters, the divers, dun birds, tufted ducks, and others may be seen under the water seeking the small pieces that sink. Few things are more interesting than to watch these beautiful birds. Nothing adds more to the at-

tractiveness of lawn or flower garden, than a collection, or even two or three pairs of these lovely creatures. They can be kept at so small cost, they are within reach of all.

POINTS OF EXHIBITION FOWLS.

DORKINGS.

ALL birds of this breed, cocks and hens, should have deep square bodies, broad backs, very full breasts, white legs, and five well-defined toes on each foot. The symmetry of the body is easily ascertained. If the head, legs and tail were cut off, a square would remain. There are three divisions of color: grey, silver grey, and white.

GREY.

Cocks.

Black, or black and white breast and tail. Light hackle and saddle.

Hens.

Slate color, ash, cobweb, speckled with brown or black; any color but black or white.

SILVER GREY.

*Cocks.**Hens.*

Perfectly black breast Hackles of alternate
and tail. White hackle white and black stripes.
and saddle. No suspicion The former should pre-
of white on the black. dominate. Body light
No buff, brown, or red grey, each feather should
on the white. have a white shaft. Robin

Steel barred wing. breast, but the color
should not appear on
the wing.

WHITE.

Cocks and hens, subject to the same rules as other dorkings, in all but color. That should be dead white. It is difficult to get this last quality in the cocks. They are very given to a straw tinge.

These were originally cuckoos and red speckled, but they have long since disappeared.

This is a breed in which two combs are equally correct. They are single and double. It is, however, not less true, that single in colored, and double in white are preferred. All must be alike in a pen.

Disqualifications.

Deficiency of toes, crooked breasts, outside spurs, colored legs.

HAMBROS.

PENCILLED.

Cocks.

Double combs, full of points, ending in stout pike turning upwards. This must be firmly fixed on the head, inclining to neither side. It must not overhang eye or nostril. It must not be hollow in the centre. The deaf-ear must be faultlessly white, perfectly round, and the size of a fourpenny piece; on no account larger than a sixpence. An ample tail, well carried, each feather black, save at the edges, which should be silver or gold edged. If all the feathers were gold or silver, it would be a grievous fault.

White or red body, sometimes a little spotted

Hens.

Bright red comb, spiked and piked, moderate sized, firmly seated on the head, without the slightest deviation on either side.

Deaf-ear, small, round and perfectly white. Hackle clear from spots.

Body, pencilled all over, from the hackle to the extremity of the tail. The pencilling should be well defined on every feather; each should bear inspection. It should have ten or more markings. The tail coverts still more. The tail feathers should be distinctly marked to their tips.

Taper blue legs.

*Cocks.**Hens.*

at the hinder parts, and
on the extremity of the
wings.

Taper blue legs.

There are two breeds of these golden and silver ; one description serves for both, as the only difference is the foundation color, one red, the other white. In both, the breast should be protuberant, the body round, and the carriage pleasant and cheerful.

SPANGLED HAMBROS.

GOLDEN.

<p>Large double comb, full of points, but overhanging neither the eye nor the nostrils ; the points sharp and well defined, not smoothed over as if it were a fungus. Full pike behind, turning upwards. Dark rim round the eye. Small deaf-ear faultlessly white. Spangled breast. Blue legs. Barred and laced; wing ; full black</p>	<p>Bright red spiked and piked moderate sized comb, firmly seated on the head, pike inclining upwards, no suspicion of a hollow. Dark, but not black hackle. Body spangled all over ; wing laced and barred, under feathers deep buff. The color of the body should be a deep bay, or rather chesnut, every feather tipped or</p>
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Cocks.

tail. The under part of plumage bright buff. The hackle well clouded, and if possible, the color so distributed, as to present neither patches nor circles. Saddle clouded in the same way. It is essential the colors should be rich, a deep bay or dark mahogany color. The wing should be maroon, barred with metallic black.

Hens.

mooned with black. These and all other markings should be clean cut, sharply defined, and bright with metallic lustre. The deaf-ear small, round, and perfectly white. Legs blue, and taper.

SILVER SPANGLED HAMBROS.

The main points, those regarding combs, deaf ears, legs, in fact all save the plumage, are the same as those already given for the golden spangled. The hackle should be white, the saddle the same. Some of the principal

Shape, comb, deaf-ear, and legs, like golden spangled. The hackle should be striped with black. Body dead white, each feather ending with a moon. A clear tail, tipped with black at the end of each feather. Wing ac-

Cocks.

feathers may have small moons on them. The breast should be black, plentifully and distinctly spotted with white. The wing barred and laced. The tail faultlessly white, save at the extremity of each feather, where there should be a well-defined moon.

Hens.

curately barred and laced if possible.

BLACK HAMBROS.

One description will serve for both. They must be entirely black, and rich in metallic lustre. The comb must be well spiked and piked, the pike turning upwards. It must be firmly fixed on the head. The deaf-ear should be small, round, and scrupulously white, legs as dark as blue can be, nearly black.

In all Hambros, an overgrown comb falling on one side, or closing the nostrils, should be carefully avoided.

SPANISH.

Cocks.

Large comb, perfectly smooth and upright. It should look as though it were made of metal. There must not be the suspicion of a turn over at the back, nor indentation at the front popularly known as the thumb mark. Spotless white face, from the comb to the throat. Long deep smooth white ear lobe. All the white should be smooth, having an even surface, everything approaching to excrescence, or what is called cauliflower face, should be avoided. Very long wattles, white on the inner

Hens.

Large soft red comb, hanging over, and concealing one side of the face. It should feel like velvet. Face, entirely white and smooth—long, thin, and skinny in appearance. Long strong beak. Ear lobe, long, and faultlessly white. Full tail, rather upright than otherwise. Black plumage, rich, with metallic hues. Blue legs. Body slanting from shoulder to tail. Proud carriage.

*Cocks.**Hens.*

side, and at their junction with the beak. Ample tail, carried up, but not over the back ; long slate colored legs. Erect haughty carriage. Plumage, quite black and rich, with metallic lustre.

Stately walk.

POLANDS.

WHITE CRESTED BLACK.

Ample top knot, as white as possible. It should not be trimmed. Subject to most of the rules that apply to the cock.

It is composed of feathers, shaped like those of the hackle, and should fall over from the centre of the crown. Leaden blue legs ; very prominent breast ; full tails and straight even backs. In this breed the cock may have gills, but no comb or even spikes. The first difference is in the top knot. This, instead of being composed of hackle feathers, should be like those from the breast or body, slightly curled, so that everyone would turn inwards, towards the centre of the crown. These should form a round top knot, it can-

*Cocks.**Hens.*

not be too large, provided the feathers are close, and should have the appearance of a cauliflower.

GOLDEN SPANGLED POLAND.

Ample top knot, not lying flat on the head, and with as little white as possible. Well-spangled breast. Wing laced and barred. Hackle and saddle, long bay feathers, each tipped, and partly edged with black. The tail coverts in this bird are richly marked, being bright bay edged and tipped with black. Blue legs, ample tail. The latter should be black, but have rich orange edging to each feather.

Protuberant breast and dignified carriage. No signs of comb, gills, or

Full top knots, and as free as possible from white feathers. These latter are overlooked in hens, but cannot be tolerated in pullets. Every feather helping to form them should be bay edged with black, and turn inwards, towards the crown of the head, forming a large and compact top knot. Clouded or striped hackle. Body rich chestnut all over, accurately and sharply spangled. No mossiness, or colors running into each other. No lacing of the feathers.

Full tail, same color

Cocks.

spikes, can be allowed or overlooked.

Hens.

as the body, and each feather should have a moon or spangle at the end.

Full prominent breast, and stately carriage. No comb or gills.

SILVER SPANGLED POLANDS.

The requirements for these are identical with the golden. The only difference being in the ground color of the plumage.

Same as the golden, save that the foundation color is white.

COCHIN CHINA FOWLS.

Small, but perfectly straight comb with correct and numerous serrations; ample hackle and saddle, slanting from the head to the middle of the back, thence rising to the tail. Thighs and hinder parts covered with nu-

Sharp intelligent face, round head. Perfectly straight small comb, full of numerous, well-defined serrations. Full hackle. Thighs and hinder parts entirely hidden in soft silky fluff; stout short legs, feathered to the toes.

Cocks.

merous soft silky feathers, that have gained the name of "fluff." Remarkably bright and intelligent eye. Very long bright red deaf-ear and wattle. The tail cannot be too scanty, and should be made up of numerous small curly feathers, that seem to roll over like the crest of a wave, rather than to stand up as they do in other fowls. The legs and outer toes should be well, but not extravagantly feathered. The wing should be so tightly clipped up, that the flight should be invisible. The carriage is bold and upright. Vulture hocks very objectionable. Legs yellow. Color red and buff. Tail sometimes made up of, or mixed with black feathers.

Hens.

Scanty thick looking necks; head carried forward, and depressed rather than upright. There should be a gradual rise in the plumage, from the back to the tip of the tail, which should end in a blunt point. Motion, slow, and measured; color, buff throughout. The wing should be clipped, so that the flight is hidden. None can fail to admire the intelligent and satisfied expression in the face of a Cochin pullet.

GROUSE AND PARTRIDGE.

Cocks.

As the points are the same as in the others, we have to do only with color. The breast must be faultlessly black. The hackle and saddle feathers rich red, or chestnut, striped with black down the middle. The wing rich red, or maroon. The tail coverts black, with orange stripe. The tail black. Legs yellow with black feathers.

Hens.

Striped, black, and gold hackle. Plumage in the one resembling that of the grouse, in the other that of the partridge. The less yellow the better. Yellow legs with black feathers.
No vulture hocks.

WHITE.

Differing from the other only in color, which should be quite white without yellow tinge. The legs should be yellow.

GAME.

Head, snake-like in shape when dubbed. When full headed, the head; slightly curved beak; small comb, quite

Cocks.

comb should be firm, moderate in size, well serrated, and perfectly upright. Strong stout beak slightly curved. Round hard body, tapering to the tail, the back having much the shape of a flat iron. Short round hard thigh. Stout leg, flat foot, spur low, near the foot. Scanty plumage, very hard, so much so, that when the bird is handled it should feel as though it had but one feather. The tail should be scanty, and carried rather down than otherwise.

The eye large and bright, contributing much to the fearless expression of face, which is so much admired in this breed.

As more symmetry is

Hens.

straight, with many well-defined serrations; long neck. Round prominent breast, quite straight. Body tapering to the tail, but round in hand. Long taper legs. Flat foot, close tail.

As in the cock, the body should handle as though it were cut out of wood. For that reason the plumage should be scanty, and every feather hard and strongly shafted, closing one over the other; till the whole plumage should appear as one.

These birds should have a gay bold carriage, and are sometimes as pugnacious as their mates.

*Cocks.**Hens.*

required of this than any other breed, the suspicion of a crooked breast or back cannot be permitted or overlooked. Neither can loose soft feathering. It may be said the less there is of feathers the better. This is especially true of hackle, saddle, and tail.

The whole expression of this bird is fearless, but more dignified than impertinent.

As all points are alike in these birds, we shall now only describe the colors of the different breeds.

BLACK-BREASTED REDS.

Deep rich red and maroon plumage. Bright and accurate bar across the wing, black with green metallic lustre.	Brown body, the shaft of each feather being white. Golden striped hackle; salmon breast.
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Legs to match the pen.

Black breast, tail, belly, and thighs. The plumage must be made up

*Cocks.**Hens.*

of these two colors, not a spot of any other can be tolerated.

Legs of any color, provided all in the pen have the same; willow and olive preferred.

BROWN RED.

Blackened face, but showing the red under it. Hackle and saddle black, and red striped; black breast, richly shaded on every feather with bright brown. Black tail. Very deep red and maroon wings. Legs, dark willow preferred. There must be no white in the plumage of this breed.

Very dark brown, with an indistinct under shade of gold visible here and there; golden striped hackle. Legs very dark or blackened willow. Face, comb, and eye, very dark, like bright red, washed with a solution of soot.

DUCK-WINGED.

Very light straw hackle and saddle; black tail, breast and thigh; copper saddle, and duck-wing,

Grey or nutmeg body, each feather having a white shaft, except the breast. This latter is

Cocks.

with the mallard color. Very red face. The duck-wing should be very plain, as the bird is named from it.

Legs yellow, olive or blue. The breast must be faultlessly black.

Hens.

salmon colored. The hackle black and white striped. Face very red. Legs to match the others in the pen.

SILVER DUCK-WING.

White head, neck, hackle, and saddle. Barred wings, bright blue. Black tail. Legs, willow, olive, or yellow. Hackle, black and white striped. Breast and body, back and thighs, all silver grey. Dark tail. No red or salmon admissible.

No red or salmon admissible.

PILES.

EITHER RED OR GINGER.

The foundation color should be cream. The bird should be distinctly marked, the saddle and wing showing the darkest shades of the color. The Cream color all over the body, and no white should be seen. The colors are not so pronounced as in the plumage of the cock, and very

Cocks.

tail should be a mixture of the two colors.

There is a breed now seldom seen that has black feathers mixed with the above. The legs should be yellow, but are sometimes dark green.

Hens.

often the darkest shade is a light brown, that becomes lighter and lighter, till it is blended with the cream. Legs, yellow or dark green.

BLACK AND WHITE.

These must merely be true to color. Among the whites, those most esteemed have bright yellow legs.

The black cocks should have glossy plumage, bright with metallic lustre.

BANTAMS.

SEBRIGHTS.

In these there are two varieties, golden and silver. As the difference is only in color, one description will serve for both.

Well-formed double comb, full of points, pike behind turning upwards,

Double comb, rather small, and tinged with blue. Every feather of the body accurately laced throughout. Clear tail, having only a black tip at the end. Blue legs, protuberant breast, round body; proud carriage.

Cocks.

seated firmly and straight upon the head. No hackle or saddle feathers. Hen tail, without the suspicion of a sickle. The entire body golden or silver, without any other color, save that each feather should be laced with black, and the tail feathers should be tipped with it at the end. Blue legs. The Cocks of this breed should drop their wings, till they nearly touch the ground. The strutting gait of the cock should cause him to carry his head back, and tail up, till they nearly meet, and the breast should protrude like that of a fantail pigeon.

Small size most desirable.

GAME BANTAMS.

There are the same varieties of color as there are of game fowls, with the exception of size, the more they resemble their larger brethren, the nearer they approach to excellence. They are called bantams, but they must differ from many of their brethren. They must not droop their wings like the sebrights. They must not have rose combs like the black. They must be small game fowls, hard feathered, their wings clipped up to their bodies. They should be scanty of tail, and carry it rather drooping than erect. They should be sharp and keen headed, have a fearless, but not a strutting carriage.

The hen must exchange the loose feather, round head, and quiet matron-like air of the common bantam hen, for the sharp cut outline of the game. Her neck must be more taper, her legs somewhat longer, and she must have the somewhat fierce and restless look of her larger sister.

Black bantams should be very small. They should have small double red combs. Perfectly white deaf ears. They should be full breasted, and have a proud carriage. Wings drooping, but this point is not so essential as in a sebright. The tail should be ample, the sickle feathers well developed and long. It should be carried up, but not over the back.

The hen should have the same faultless white deaf

ear, a sharp neat head, and a prominent breast. In both sexes the legs should be taper, and either black or blue.

The white bantams are the same in every point, but in them single combs are not so much objected to as in the black, nor is the 'white deaf-ear so essential. These should have white legs.

Late years have introduced us to some interesting pets in the shape of bantams imported from Japan. There is no fixed size or weight named for them, and they are larger than their English brethren, although small enough to justify their claim to the title of bantam. It is said that in their native country they are the constant companions of man, and their domesticity and gentle habits would seem to prove it. In one respect they resemble the bakies or dumpies, their legs are so short, and their wings are carried so drooping, that their means of locomotion are scarcely visible. They have large combs, and full tail; that of the cock is carried over the back, till it nearly touches his head. He is that which is known to amateurs as squirrel tailed. There are two sorts, differing however only in one small particular. Some are white, without other color, and others have black striped hackle, and partially black tails. They are birds of a cheerful carriage, and we know few that are more qualified to become pets.

Another bantam was seen for a year or two, and then disappeared, to the regret of many admirers. They were called the Pekin bantams. They were the exact counter-parts of the buff cochin, but reduced to the size of a small bantam. They were greatly admired.

BRAHMA POUTRAS.

Cocks.

Very large. Pea comb. Sharp head; deep breast, black or speckled with white; thighs black. Hackle and saddle light and ample. Tail black, and if spreading at the extremity, so much the better, very scanty, without the least appearance of sickle feathers. Yellow legs. Very well feathered to the toes. Well fluffed behind. Stately walk. The comb must not fall over.

Vulture hocks in both sexes are objectionable.

Hens.

Sharp, well shaped, and intelligent head and face. Hackle, black and white striped. Body, delicately pencilled all over. Pea comb. Dusky yellow legs, short, and amply feathered to the toes. Deep breast, and heavy fluff behind, only an apology for a tail, which should end in a blunt point.

It is very desirable the pencilling of these hens should reach the throat.

The comb must not fall over.

LIGHT BRAHMAS.

The points of these birds are identical with those of their darker brethren, the difference is only in color. The cock should have white plumage, save the hackle, which should be lightly marked with black, the saddle the same. The tail and flights should be black. The hen should be white, except the hackle, striped with black, also the flight and the tail.

Both should have pea combs, very red, and firmly fixed on the head, not falling over. The legs should be yellow, and well feathered to the toes. They should not be vulture hocked, if they are intended to be good specimens of the breed.

MALAY.

*Cocks.**Hens.*

Very strong beak ;	The hen should have
pearl eye ; naked throat ;	the same cruel expression
skinny face ; round, hard	of face, and the skin of it
and scantily feathered	should be wrinkled. She
body ; firm low comb,	should have the same
flattened to the head.	naked crop and scanty
Crop, and points of wing,	hard plumage.
red and naked. Large	She differs from the
head, cruel expression of	cock principally in the
face. Sloping body.	tail, which is carried up.

Cocks.

Scanty tail, yet having sickle feathers drooping from its insertion downwards. Very long clean legs. A choice specimen when standing erect, and a Malay cannot be too tall; should present three curves, one from the head to the shoulders, one from the shoulder to the tail, and one from the root to the extremity of it; color, red, with black breast and tail.

There are also white Malays. These must have no mixture of color.

Hens.

In both sexes the feathers should be so scanty and hard, that they look as though they were carved in wood. The hen should also stand very upright, and the body should present the two first curves already described for the cock.

Color, reddish brown, sometimes with dark chocolate hackle.

CREVECŒUR.

Round head, with beard and top knot. Comb, composed of two distinct spirals in front, sometimes plain, sometimes uneven, but always erect. Very long wattles. Large

Round head, with ample beard and top knot; deep breast, square body. Short blue legs. Cheerful carriage. Small spirals in front, in lieu of comb. Full tail.

Cocks.

open nostrils. Short blue legs. Entirely black and lustrous plumage. Full tail, carried up. This bird, more than any other, has the shape of the Dorking, having a thick and heavy body.

Old crevecœur cocks are apt to moult colored feathers, especially in the top knot, where they come white.

Hens.

As these get old, they also grow white feathers in their top knots. This may be overlooked, but no mixture of color is admissible in any part of the body.

LA FLÈCHE.

A tall upstanding very long-legged bird. Two small spikes in lieu of comb, growing immediately above the eyes. One small spike growing above and between the nostrils. Very long gills. Large white deaf-ears imperatively necessary. Black, close, hard, and not

Same carriage as the cock. Same singular comb and nostrils. Tail carried downwards, rather than otherwise. Black close plumage. Round body, large white deaf-ear. Large body, very heavy in hand. Dark blue legs.

Cocks.

redundant plumage. Full tail, carried upright. Body, tapering towards the tail. Leaden blue legs. Small crest or top knot, falling backwards.

Hens.

HOUDANS.

Impudent looking round head, with beard, top knot, and long gills. Triple comb of flattened spikes, opening from right to left, and jagged at the edges; another spike lower down, that may be of any form. Round body, much heavier in hand than would be thought from its appearance. Ample tail. Color of plumage, black and white. Short legs, spangled black and white. Five well-defined claws on each foot.

Yellow feathers are

Nearly as large as the cock. Round heavy body. Either half or entire top knot, the latter preferred; beard full, but not long; scarcely any comb, gills, or deaf-ears. Large head. Short legs, speckled black and white, with well-defined five toes on each. Tail carried upright; plumage, black and white, and a good specimen must have *no* other color.

Cocks.

found in the plumage of some cocks. These may be overlooked, but red ones may not.

DUCKS.

AYLESBURY.

The two principal points are pale flesh-colored bill, and great weight. The bill should be long, broad, and straight. The body perfectly white. The legs orange colored. No amount of merit can palliate an orange bill. There are ducks with excellent bills, save that they have black spots on them. These are not necessarily impure, but they should not be chosen for exhibition or for breeders, unless they are wanted only for the table.

ROUEN.

Great weight. Plumage, the true counterpart of the mallard and wild duck. The failings most frequently met with, are white flights, rings round the neck of the duck, leaden green bills.

All these must be avoided.

GEESE.

TOULOUSE.

Very large. The largest of the tribe. Upright carriage. Color, a shaded grey. Belly, a dull white,

and nearly touching the ground. Bill, flesh color. Legs red.

The white and Embden should have no mixture of color. Their bills are darker than the Toulouse, and they do not drop so much behind.

BUENOS AYREAN DUCKS.

Almost the greatest excellence of these birds in an exhibition sense, is to be very small. The first imported were as nearly as possible the size of widgeon. The drake should be black, but the whole plumage shaded with most brilliant green metallic lustre. The bill should be very dark green, and the legs as nearly black as can be.

The duck is smaller than the drake, and has less lustre, although the more she has the better. Her bill should be quite black, and her legs very dark. They should have no white feathers, but even the best are prone to throw a few.

CALL DUCKS.

Very small. Perfectly round heads, and short broad straight bills. They have a very loud and long cry, from which they derive their name. There are two breeds. One should be perfectly white, with orange bill and legs. The other colored in all points, like mallard and wild duck.

The way to dispose profitably of any old Cock or Hen, or Goose or Duck, that may be killed, either on account of age or to make room for younger ones.

Cut the bird up into small pieces, and season according to taste. Look up every scrap of meat in the pantry or larder. The bits adhering to the shoulder or leg-bone of mutton; the knuckle of the same; the dry pieces of lean of ham or bacon. If you have none of these, you can buy the coarsest of coarse meat at the butchers for very small cost. Cut all this up small. Cut a few slices of fat bacon, and toast odd pieces of bread or crust.

Take a tureen or earthenware pan of any form, oval preferred, with a cover of the same material, perforated through the handle. Cover the bottom of this vessel with the fat sliced bacon. Then take the meat and put it in a piece at a time, making as it were a sort of mosaic, thus: first a joint or piece of the poultry; then a piece of ham or bacon; then a piece of bread; then a refuse piece of meat; then a piece of fat, (nothing is more useful than fat in these pâtés). Everything that is eatable must be put in a piece at a time, until the tureen is filled. It should then be filled with stock, till the vessel is quite full. If stock is not "convenient" fill up with water. Tie down the lid, and put it in a slack oven for eight or ten hours. When taken out put it on stones to get cold, and when cold serve for breakfast or dinner. Every morsel of meat is "set" in rich jelly, and the whole cuts like a piece of the old Sienna marble. The advantage of this mode is, it makes refuse delicious. The choicest food would make the dish no better.



B A I L Y ' S

Roup and Condition Pills for Fowls.

It has long been desirable to possess a cure for that bane of the Poultry-yard, the Roup, and after being submitted to every and the most severe tests, these Pills have accomplished it. The first symptom of the disease is a laboured breathing on the part of the fowl; the skin below the lower bill is inflated and emptied at every respiration. In this stage of the disorder one pill given every night makes a cure in a few days. In extreme cases, where the nostrils are stopped, the head swollen, and the bird offensive, it is well to wash the head, face, and eyes with vinegar and water every morning, and administer one pill every night. If the case proves very obstinate, two pills may be given every third night instead of one, but this is seldom necessary.

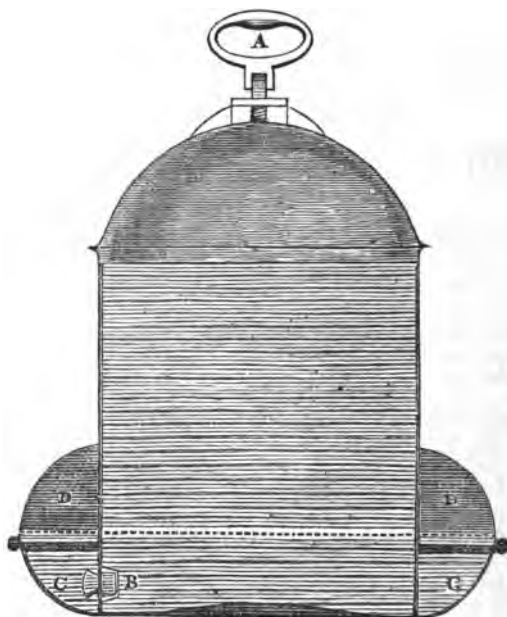
Where fowls are drooping without any visible malady, one pill every night for two or three nights will remove every unfavourable symptom. In all cases a dose of one tablespoonful of Castor-oil should be given six hours before the first pill.

Fowls returning from Exhibitions should always be treated with the oil, and then with pills, for two or three days, and in all cases fed entirely on oatmeal slaked with warm water.

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By the use of them many diseases in Chickens are avoided, as although there is an ample supply of water they cannot get into it.

The plan of this fountain is so simple, it is almost impossible it can get out of order, and the workmanship throughout being of the best character, durability may be depended upon. To fill it the screw A is removed, and the plug B put in; when full the screw is replaced tight, and the plug removed; the water then flows clear into the trough C, keeping it full nearly to the brim, so long as any remains in the reservoir; the trough is sub-divided by partitions D, to prevent the birds of any kind from getting into it. The fountain should be emptied and refilled every day.

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